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The Graal Problem

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THE GRAAL PROBLEM

FROM WALTER MAP
TO RICHARD WAGNER

BY

J. S. TUNISON

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*What is it?
The phantom of a cup that comes and goes?*

*Was I too dark a prophet when I said
To those who went upon the Holy Quest,
That most of them would follow wandering fires
Lost in the quagmire?*

PREFACE

Brevity has been zealously aimed at in the pages that follow. To have added translations and abstracts and detailed analysis of the Arthurian romances to what in that kind is already existent and readily accessible for all who wish to investigate the subject, would be a mere impertinence in a writer whose qualifications for the task here essayed are those of a critic and mediævalist, and not those of a folk-lorist or interpreter. The attempt is made to deal solely with the difficulties of a literary cycle, and the merits of the solution are left to the acuteness and penetration of readers.

As to the use of the orthography *graal* in place of the conventional *grail*, nothing more can be said than that the former is historically the earlier form, and the one which indicates clearly the derivation of the tales in which it

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figures. If one were writing an essay on Tennyson's poems, the spelling *grail* would be sufficiently accurate; but in a field of investigation where Tennyson apparently never ventured, the usage which he sanctioned may justly be neglected, if good reasons can be given for the deviation.

In stopping short with the consideration of Wagner's drama as literature, leaving the discussion of his music untouched, the dictates have been followed of both necessity and reason — necessity, through lack of requisite musical learning; reason, because it is only as a poet that Wagner can be compared with his predecessors.

The author's thanks are due to Frank E. Tunison, of *The Dayton Journal*, for timely suggestions and for efficient aid in reading the proofs of this book.

J. S. TUNISON.

BETA THETA PI ROOMS,

CINCINNATI, *January*, 1904.

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I

A NEGLECTED POINT OF VIEW

Current agitation on the subject of Richard Wagner's *Parsifal* prompts a discussion of the entire Graal motive in fiction, mediæval and modern, from a new point of view. The Arthurian romances have been analyzed scientifically as folklore,¹ in a literary way with

1. See WECHSLER, *Sage von der Heil. Gral*; HAGEN, *Parzival-Studien*; BIRCH-HIRSCHFELD, *Die Sage vom Gral, ihre Entwicklung in Frankreich und Deutschland*, etc. Allusions in FISKE, *Myths and Mythmakers*; CLOUSTON, *Popular Tales and Fictions*; LIEBRECHT, *Gervase of Tilbury's Otia Imperialia*; WRIGHT, *St. Patrick's Purgatory*; and many others, but especially Sir GEORGE COX, *The Mythology of the Aryan Nations*.

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reference to their beauty as works of art,² æsthetically with an eye to plastic representation,³ critically in respect to their racial origin;⁴ but hardly, if at all, in the light of the environment that surrounded the men who are supposed to have written them. This last would be the very first thing to be considered in the case of modern fiction. Scott's great series of novels can be viewed solely as a collection of more or less ancient

2. Almost any collection of essays on Tennyson illustrates this point. See also introductions to various editions of Sir Thomas Malory and criticisms of the book that goes by his name.

3. Vide Abbey's mural paintings in the Boston Public Library and the critical writings thereby inspired.

4. ALFRED NUTT, *Studies on the Legend of the Holy Grail*, and, *The Legends of the Holy Grail*; HEINZEL, *Die Französischen Gral-romane*; WECHSLER, *Die Verschiedenen Redaktionen der Graal-Lancelot Cyklus*; LICHTENSTEIN, *Zur Parzival Frage*; WAITZ, *Die Fortsetzungen von Crestien's Perceval le Gallois*; NITZE, *The Old French Grail Romance of Perlesvaus*; RHYS, *The Arthurian Legend*; KRAUSSOLD, *Die Sage vom Heiligen Gral und Parceval*; BERGMANN, *The San Greal*, etc.

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Scottish legend and tradition. They can be, and they have been, discussed to weariness, with reference to their literary merits. But the man Scott, in his historic place, with the influences, moral, social, religious, literary, political, professional, to which he was subject, looms large in all comments upon his work, and most frequently the critics are so engrossed with him and his circumstances as to give the impression of unity to his mass of fiction which it would never give to any reader on its own account.

An example, even more noteworthy, of the importance of environment is that of Wagner himself, particularly because of what is known of the stages of development in the composition of this play of *Parsifal*. It is well known that he meditated a music drama, first with Jesus, then with Buddha, as the central figure, years before the device of the Graal occurred to him.

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If the dates of his experiments are examined, it will be found that his inceptive Jesus play was conceived in the midst of that rationalistic disturbance in Germany, marked to the popular mind by Strauss's *Life of Jesus*.⁵ This work was first published in 1835; but the movement of which it was an index hardly reached its maximum before the middle of the century. Renan's *Vie de Jesus*, obviously a product of the movement somewhat belated in its transit from one nation to another, was issued in 1863. Thus Wagner, busy with a Jesus play in 1848, was alert to the new thought at its climax.

The inchoate Buddha play belongs to the time when Schopenhauer's magnum opus, *The World as Will and Idea*, neglected for a quarter of a century, began, at its second pub-

5. KREHBIEL, *Studies in the Wagnerian Drama*, p. 163. A significant reminiscence of Frau Wille is quoted by FINCK, *Wagner and His Works*, II., p. 399.

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lication, to affect the thought of Europe.⁶ Though the second edition appeared in 1844, it was much later in reaching its final success. Speaking of Herbart and Schopenhauer together and in contrast, Erdmann explains elaborately why, under the shadow of Hegel, "the period of deserved recognition could first come to the two only a short time before their death." Schopenhauer died in 1860. The date, then, of 1856 for Wagner's Buddha play is coincident with the triumph of the philosopher he admired.

Finally the *Parsifal* complete was worked out under the patronage of a Catholic monarch, and in the heart of a Catholic community,⁷ where mediæval ideas were still vital, and, one may say, rampant. No doubt the ascetic reaction in the writings of Schopen-

6. ERDMANN, *History of Philosophy*, English translation, II., p. 608.

7. Wagner's own date for the beginning of this work is the spring of 1865.

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hauer against fat, prosperous, well-fed, well-married German Protestantism⁸ had its effect in turning Wagner to the Catholic ideal of Christian life, but his almost abnormal self-consciousness made him peculiarly sensitive to the atmosphere about him, and the atmosphere of Bavaria was adapted above all to the creation of *Parsifal*.

Thus, aside from the genius of the poet-composer, one may say that the drama of *Parsifal*, in its gradual evolution, through years of cogitation and experiment, was the result of German rationalism, of Schopenhauer's pessimistic philosophy, and of a Catholic reaction in a mind which had been highly revolutionary.

8. "Protestantism, since it has eliminated asceticism and its central point, the meritoriousness of celibacy, has already given up the inmost kernel of Christianity. . . . It seems to me that Catholicism is a shamefully abused, but Protestantism a degenerate, Christianity; thus that Christianity in general has met the fate which befalls all that is noble, sublime and great whenever it has to dwell among men." SCHOPENHAUER, *The World as Will and Idea*, Engl. Transl., III., pp. 447, 449.

II

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It can not be hoped at this late day to restore the personality and surroundings of the two or at most three men who created, in a literary sense, the Arthur legends. But enough can be done to show that the narratives came into being with as distinct a purpose as that evident in Wagner's *Parsifal*, or in Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, as expressed in the Dedication to the memory of Prince Albert —

These to His Memory—since he held them dear
Perchance as finding there unconsciously
Some image of himself—I dedicate,
I dedicate, I consecrate with tears—
These Idylls;

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or more lightly in the lines that accompanied the *Morte d'Arthur* as published in 1842 —

To me, methought, who waited with a crowd,
There came a bark, that, blowing forward, bore
King Arthur, like a modern gentleman
Of stateliest port; and all the people cried,
“Arthur is come again : he cannot die.”

Recurring to the case of Scott, one is confronted at the outset with an important fact, namely, that while the material which he gathered into his novels was mostly derived from his own country, his literary method was merely an improvement on a German invention which had been in use for many years, and which culminated in a book very familiar to him, Goethe's *Goetz von Berlichingen*.¹ Precisely this thing happened also to the authors

1. Beginning, according to WILSON'S DUNLOP, *History of Prose Fiction*, with Frau Naubert, and proceeding to Goethe's time in the works of Meissner, Fessler, Schlenkert and others. Compare Carlyle's reference to *Götz with the Iron Hand* in his review of LOCKHART'S *Life of Scott*.

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of Arthurian romance. The material is largely Celtic—that is, British, Irish, or Armorican;² the literary form was suggested by familiarity with the Frankish legends of Charlemagne and his paladins.³ It should always be kept in mind that the Pseudo-Turpin's book preceded Geoffrey of Monmouth by at least twenty years, and Geoffrey was undoubtedly acquainted with it, or he would hardly have committed the strange anachronism of having Charlemagne's Twelve Peers at Arthur's coronation in Caerleon.

The special feature of a round table and a military order associated with it may confidently be set down as a loan from the Byzantines. The old triclinium of the Romans was

2. See the works of RHYS and NUTT in particular on this point.

3. HAZLITT'S WARTON, *History of English Poetry*, I., p. 108. Geoffrey's work did not become public before 1135. The Pseudo-Turpin had been pronounced genuine by Pope Calixtus in 1122, and must have been known to readers some years earlier.

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replaced early in the times of the empire, upon the importation of costly woods from Africa, by a crescent-shaped table,⁴ with cushions or stibadia around the outer edge, while the inner curve was open to the attendants. Often a small round table was set in the opening, and from this the guests were served, as from a modern sideboard. The customs of Britain in Arthur's time are of no significance in Arthurian romance. Nevertheless, the Romans must have had tables in their British residences similar to those they had in Italy. The curved table was sometimes called *sigma*, in allusion to that form of the Greek letter which resembled the Latin C. The complete semi-circle was a later invention, and was one of the many forms of table used at imperial banquets in Constantinople. The

4. An illustration of this kind of table can be found in LANCIANI, *Pagan and Christian Rome*, p. 357. This picture shows that the crescent-shaped table outlasted the fashion of recumbency at meals.

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emperor, or the emperor and empress, if the latter were present, sat in the middle of the straight side, the guests around the curved side, so that each was equally distant from the place of honor.⁵ The first time that such a table was used in the west, so far as I know, was at a certain highly ceremonious dinner given by Emperor Otto the Third, whose mother was a Byzantine princess, to his nobles at Quedlinburg⁶ toward the close of the tenth century. Otto's arrogance and the great number of his guests led him to a variation which destroyed the meaning of the Byzantine custom and deeply offended his

5. It must be admitted that there is some dispute as to this, but all the probabilities favor the position taken in the text.

6. Imperator antiquam Romanorum consuetudinem jam ex parte magna deletam, suis cupiens renovare temporibus, multa faciebat, quae diversi diverse accipiebant. Solus ad mensam quasi semicirculum factum, loco caeteris eminentiori sedebat. DITMARUS, Lib. IV., LEIBNITZ, *Scriptores Rerum Brunsvicensium*, I., p. 357.

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court. But in the twelfth century the thing was thoroughly understood, as may be inferred from the description of a royal feast which Walter Map⁷ — a man of mark in the history of Arthur romances — gives in one of his Latin stories. A complete circle would have been rejected by the Greek emperor because it gave him no distinction. The thing is so impracticable under any rules of mediæval manners that have ever been discovered or even imagined, that Wagner in the performance of *Parsifal*⁸ replaced it with two semi-circular tables, and it remains to be proved that the Arthur romances alluded to more than the historic half-circle. By any other contrivance the King either took rank

7. Erat autem hemiciclum immensum regi pro mensa regique sedes in centro, quatinus eliminato livore in hemiciclo sedentes regiae sedis essent omnes aequaliter proximi, ne quisquam posset de sua remotione dolere nec de vicinia gloriari. WRIGHT'S MAPES, *De Nugis Curialium*, p. 113.

8. FINCK, op. cit. II., p. 418.

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with his subjects or turned his back on half his guests. Posidonius,⁹ it is true, says that the ancient Celts, when numerous at a feast, were accustomed to sit in a circle, with the man in the centre most notable in arms, descent or riches. But this relates to a time when these barbarians had no tables.

The first historic notice of a round-table military order is that of Cassiodorus¹⁰ respecting Theodoric, the Ostrogothic King of Italy, and Theodoric's frank acceptance of everything Byzantine¹¹ which did not inter-

9. ATHENÆUS, *Deipnosoph.*, quoted by Wilson: "Όταν δὲ πλείονες συνδείπνωσαν κάθηνται μὲν ἐν κύκλῳ, μέσος δὲ ὁ κράτιστος ὡς ἂν κορυφαῖος χοροῦ διαφέρων τῶν ἄλλων ἢ κατὰ τὴν πολεμικὴν εὐχέρειαν, ἢ κατὰ τὸ γένος, ἢ κατὰ πλούτον, κ.τ.λ.

10. CASSIODORUS, *Var.*, lib. XII.

11. CASSIODORUS, *Var.* IV. 15. A modern Greek admirer of Theodoric, writes: "Ἡ φιλομονσία τοῦ 'Αναστασίου μετεδόθη πιθανῶς καὶ ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ Θεοδορίκου, ἀφοῦ ρητῶς βλέπωμεν τὸν ἐν Ρώμῃ βασιλεύοντα Γότθαν ὁμολογοῦντα ἑαυτὸν· "πιστὸν μμητὴν τοῦ βίου καὶ τῆς κυβερνήσεως τοῦ 'Αναστασίου" [vos enim estis regnorum omnium decus, vos totius orbis salute praesidium . . . Regnum nostrum imitatio vestra forma est, forma boni propositi, unici exemplar imperii. CASSIODORI,

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fere with his authority is well known. The tradition concerning Edward the Confessor, if trustworthy, proves only that the Saxons had military round-tables at a date when Arthur romances had not yet been thought of. It is a mere inference to say that the institution of the Round Table was transferred to Brittany and thence to Wales; and a useless inference, since it involves, consciously or unconsciously, a view of the Arthur tales as historical. That assumption would be ridiculous, even granting that Arthur was once a

Var., lib. I., Epist. I.] 'Ὡς ὁ τελευταῖος, οὕτω καὶ ὁ Θεοδωρικός καταργεῖ τὰς θηριομαχίας ἀποκαλῶν αὐτὰς ἀσπλαγχνον καὶ βάρβαρον ἔθιμον. 'Ο Ρωμαϊκὸς λαὸς εἶχε λησμονήσει πλεον τ' ἐσήμαινον αἱ λέξεις θέατρον, κωμωδία, τραγωδία, σκηνή, ὁ δὲ Θεοδωρικός δι' ἐδίκτου συνταχθέντος ὑπὸ Κασσιόδωρου διδάσκει τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ τὰς σημασίας τῶν ἐλληνικῶν τούτων λέξεων. 'Ἐπειδὴ δὲ τότε Ρῶμη οὔτε τραγωδοὺς, οὔτε ἄλλους σκηνικοὺς εἶχεν, ὑποτίθεται, ὅτι τοιοῦτοι ἦλθον ἐκ Βυζαντίου ὅπως ἀναδιδάξωσι τοὺς ὑπηκόους τοῦ Θεοδωρικοῦ τὴν ἐλληνικὴν τέχνην· διὰ τὸν λόγον δὲ τοῦτον βλέπομεν τοὺς ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ Γότθους ὑβρίζοντας τοὺς Βυζαντινοὺς ἐπὶ Ἰουστινιανοῦ καὶ λέγοντας ὅτι ἐξ αὐτῶν μόνον εἶδον ἐρχομένους εἰς Ἰταλίαν τραγωδοὺς, μίμους καὶ πειρατάς. SATHAS. 'Ιστορικὸν Δοκίμον περὶ τοῦ Θεάτρου καὶ τῆς Μουσικῆς τῶν Βυζαντινῶν. κ.τ.λ., p. τλθ' (339).

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British king, a real flesh and blood personage. Besides, Rhys ap Tudor, twelfth century, to whom the British or Welsh Round Table is attributed, comes much too late to avail in the Arthur legend, though he may have had significance in the politics of an age when the tomb of Arthur had to be discovered at Glastonbury¹² to quiet seditious plots against the new Plantagenet dynasty.

Round tables after the twelfth century were numerous. But they are manifestly of no importance except as attesting the growing popularity of the fiction which they illustrated. This restrictive argument also applies

12. In 1189, probably just before the death of Henry the Second. In identifying the tomb of Arthur and Guinevere, the Plantagenet party merely imitated a proceeding of Otto the Third in Germany, who had opened the tomb of Charlemagne, and taken therefrom the cross which hung on the neck of the sainted emperor, as well as those parts of the vesture which were not gone to decay. In both cases the sacrilege, real with Otto, pretended with Henry, was a political necessity.

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to certain forms of literature more or less vaguely asserted as the primitive and original material of the Arthur romances. Granting that Geoffrey of Monmouth had a Celtic manuscript which nobody but himself and Walter Calenius ever saw, it must still be conceded that this manuscript had no influence on subsequent writings except by Geoffrey's intervention. That Marie de France, a century or more after his time, found written as well as oral Breton lore is defective evidence, because much had happened in the meantime. The relics of the genuinely ancient British bards contain no signs of romance. They were interested in real events and in heroes who were their contemporaries. Willingly accepting the tales of the Mabinogion at the estimate, with regard to antiquity, put upon them by Celtic experts, one still has to deal with the cold fact that the imagination of the world at large was not touched by them, nor

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did it betray any knowledge of them until long after the Arthur tales were in being. This was not the case with the Teutonic hero tales. Beowulf was well known as early as the eighth century, and even then existed only in a recension, with a manifestly different geographical setting from that of the original.

III

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Not only was the material of the tales largely British, while the form was Teutonic,—that is, Frankish, after a model dating from a period when the Franks had not yet become French,—but there was a further complication in that the language used as a vehicle by the authors was not in the first instance either English or German, nor yet Latin, the ordinary literary medium of the twelfth century, but French—that is, *Langue-doïl*. This was the language of the court of England, of Normandy, of Anjou, and of the chivalry of those countries, and these countries were the ones most interested in directing romance about ancient Britain to a con-

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temporary purpose. In fact, Anjou, with Normandy and the larger part of what is now France, was looked upon as the property of the English King, who was himself Angevin by birth,¹ Norman by descent,² and English only as the result of the treaty of Wallingford between his mother, the Empress Matilda, and King Stephen, by which he succeeded the latter on the throne of England. Stephen's reign was a time of vast disorder, and Henry the Second found, on taking possession, that he had before him an enormous task. His hopes and his world-wide popularity³ were

1. Eldest son of Count Geoffrey and born in Anjou.

2. His mother, Matilda, had been the wife of Henry the Fifth, Holy Roman Emperor. She was the daughter of Henry the First of England, and granddaughter of William the Conqueror.

3. See Sir JAMES H. RAMSEY, *The Angevin Empire*, for a complete statement of Henry's successes as well as his failures. "Henry's management of foreign affairs was undeniably successful. He held France in the hollow of his hand." His wide renown Map attested after his death in the words: "Cujus potestatem totus

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equal to it. It has been said of him that his brain was filled with the thought of an England as great as that of modern times. Undoubtedly his ideas were imperial,—it could not have been otherwise in such a man, with such a mother,—but his mind was guided by a known past, not an unknown future. No afterthought about Henry's errors of policy can detract from the imperial movement of his earlier years.

With holdings that were at the outset almost as great as those which Charlemagne

fere timet orbis." *De Nugis Curial.*, p. 60. He also quotes this singular compliment of the French king after a battle in which the latter had been defeated: "Mihi frequenter in omnibus fere Franciae finibus contigit, ut nunc et infortunium frequentia durus sum parumque vereor; sed Anglorum rex Henricus, qui nos hodie confecit, continuis jacet in successibus, et qui nunquam aliquid sinistri perpressus est, si contigisset ei quod nobis, intolerabiliter et immoderate doleret, et prae nimietate doloris infatuari possit aut mori, rex bonus et toti Christianismo necessarius. Inde reputo victoriam ejus mihi pro successu quia perdidissemus." *Ibid*, p. 218.

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obtained by force of arms,⁴ Henry had every reason to aspire to supremacy over all Christendom. The reading public of Europe had been assured in a recent book of wide renown by a Welshman, Griffith ap Arthur (Geoffrey of Monmouth), that a Briton had once been Roman emperor, and had been crowned at Rome. That was surely precedent good enough for the man who, it is now said, completed the conquest of Ireland by the forgery⁵ of a papal decree. No doubt Geoffrey of Monmouth wrote his chronicle with a very different aim from that of strengthening a line of foreign kings in England. More likely he hoped in his own time

4. Charlemagne's empire comprised France, Germany west of the Elbe, Northern Italy, and Spain north of the Ebro; Henry's, England, Southern Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Normandy, Maine, Brittany, Anjou, Burgundy and Aquitaine—in fact, about the whole of France except the Isle de France.

5. See Professor Thatcher's recent discussion of this subject.

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for what was realized centuries later by the accession of the Tudors. But Henry seized the idea.⁶ Fiction was as useful to him as fact. He imitated the practice of the German king-emperors by having his eldest son Henry crowned as his coadjutor, and the two certainly encouraged, if they did not directly inspire, the literary movement which resulted

6. There are repeated evidences that Henry urged the theme upon romancers and poets. Thus, in the National Library at Paris there is "Lancelot du Lac mis en François, par [Walter Mapes], du commandement d'Henri roi d'Angleterre." HAZLITT'S WARTON, *Hist. Engl. Poetry*, II., p. 111. Again, p. 116: "Quant Boort at conte laventure del Saint Graal teles com eles estoient avenues eles furent mises en escrit, gardes en lamere de Salisbieres, dont Mestre Galtier Map l'estrest a faist son livre du Saint Graal por lamor du roy Henri son sengor, qui fist lestoire tralater del Latin en romanz;" and p. 118: "Lancelot du Lac mis en François, par Robert de Borron par le commandement de Henri roi d'Angleterre." However, he, or rather Mr. Price, in a note to his well-known preface (I., p. 48), mentioned a Vatican MS. of the Saint Graal, which begins with the words: "Mesir Robert de Borron qui cheste estore translata de Latine en Romance par le commandement de Saint Eglise."

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in the translation of Geoffrey's chronicle, first by Wace into Norman French, then into English by Layamon; and parallel to this, the expansion of the story of Arthur in the romances of the Graal, of Lancelot, of Merlin, of Arthur's Death, and of Perceval. The tradition which fixes the authorship of most of these works in the person of Walter Map,⁷ from 1162 onward a man high in the confidence of English royalty, evinces the

7. It may be worth while to remark that Map was not a Welshman, as some have stated, though he was born near enough to the Welsh border to acquire a dislike for Welshmen little short of that which he had for Cistercian monks. See FABRICIUS, *Bibliotheca Latina Mediae et Infimae Aetatis*, under the name Gualterus; LEYSER, *Historia Poetarum et Poematum Medii Aevi*, p. 776, seq., and WRIGHT, *Biographia Britannica Literaria*, II., p. 295, seq., also the introduction to Wright's edition of *Poems of Walter Mapes* and of Map's *De Nugis Curialium*, for such particulars as are known of his career. He seems to have quit literature and public life together about 1196. His satirical remarks in old age on the court show that he was weary of its vanities and mutations.

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motive in all the earliest portions of the Arthur romantic cycle. With two French kings and the French-speaking nobility of England, Normandy and Anjou to please, the stories could be written only in French, while the hopes of future increase of power and the pride of descent in these kings and this nobility furnished the point of view from which the romancers must contemplate their task. Because Charlemagne was historically crowned at Rome, Arthur had to receive the same honor, at least in imagination, and the whole of that prolonged, futile effort of English sovereigns to create a continental empire had to be forecast in the phantasmal career of a British prince. The real Arthur fought only against the Saxons. He never was out of Great Britain, and was commander of a whole army in but one battle. It is difficult to conceive how all that farrago of imperialism could have been imagined before Planta-

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genet times. As to Henry the Second, coming as he did from a continental realm, large in fact and still larger in its possibilities, his feeling must have been very similar to that of a much later King of England, William the Third, who only accepted the English crown in order to strengthen his armies for his struggle with the King of France.

What Henry the Second hoped to attain was prefigured in tales, the most significant of which were written, as one may say, under his eye. Nor could Henry have failed to see the ecclesiastical aspect of the affair in the light that had been habitual with the Norman princes.⁸ There was no cause obvious in the middle of the twelfth century why the Norman power, which had spread so widely in less than two hundred years, should fall short

8. Hallam alludes to the "closer dependence upon Rome" produced by the Norman Conquest. See BRYCE, *Holy Roman Empire*, p. 160, for the substance of a letter from Gregory VII. to William the Conqueror.

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of Roman greatness.⁹ Then the knightly brotherhood foreshadowed in the recent organization of the Templars¹⁰ would cover all Christendom, and Church and State would march forward together in a quest of which the Graal was only a faint symbol.

It is hardly worth while to enumerate the royal and noble houses of Europe that were furnished in those days with pedigrees reaching straight back without a break to the Round Table. To illustrate the general fact, the single instance may be noted of Edward, Duke of Buckingham, beheaded in 1521, who caused an English translation to be made by Robert Copland of the French romance, *The Knight of the Swan*, a cognate of *Lohengrin* and *Perceval*, because he traced his descent through Godfrey of Bullogne back to Helias,

9. Hallam says: "That high-spirited race of Normandy, whose renown then filled Europe and Asia."

10. Founded, according to Matthew Paris, in 1118.

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Knight of the Swan.¹¹ But Arthur and his court became the ideal of society and almost touched the solid ground of universal belief. It is sometimes said that the Celtic imagination worked this miracle. On the contrary, it was the organizing capacity of the Gallicized Teutons,¹² once Northmen, now growing daily more Frenchified, which gave to the wildest improbabilities the hue and consistency of history. These transformed Scandinavians achieved so much because they read their own age in all its details, its chivalry, its crusading spirit, its religious dogmas, its ecclesiastical forms, its social customs, its personal and national ideals, its moralizing temper, its allegorizing habit, and above all, its

11. THOMS, *Early English Prose Romances*, Introduction, p. 11.

12. There is an eloquent tribute to the characteristics of the Normans in JUSSELAND'S volume on Langland's *Vision of Piers the Plowman*.

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gift of telling *gabs*,¹³ into a remote past, dexterously using the scattered lore of that very past to give their scheme an air of truth.

The first great blow to Henry's hopes was the death of his son in 1182. Then he quarreled with the Church, and his remaining sons almost dismembered his realm. Long before the end of the century the Order of Knights Templars, as Map himself testifies,¹⁴ began to show signs of degeneracy. Thus it may be regarded, on purely external evidence, as certain that, so far as the cycle of Arthur tales belongs to the twelfth century, it is comprised in the earlier years of Henry's reign. This must be particularly the case with the romance of the Graal in view of its uncompromising orthodoxy on the doctrine of tran-

13. A *gab* usually was a mere vulgar, often obscene boast, but in the mouth of a person of genius it became a brilliant improvisation.

14. For Map's short essay on the Templars see *De Nugis Curialium*, p. 29, seq.

HENRY THE SECOND

substantiation, and of the figure of Sir Galahad, which was probably meant as a tribute to the younger Henry.

In connection with this may be mentioned the curious afterthought of the romancers, who, having created Galahad, decided to give his father the same name. They explained that the latter was called Galahad in infancy, but received the name of Lancelot when abducted by the Lady of the Lake. Another coincidence is to be found in the female names. The mother of Sir Galahad was Elaine, and the mother of young Henry, wife of Henry the Second, was Eleanor.¹⁵ That

15. If Elaine figures in the romances after anything but a modest fashion, Eleanor was worse, according to Map, who had no respect for persons after they were dead. Cui [Stephano] successit Henricus Matildis filius, in quem injecit oculos incestos Alienor Francorum regina, Ludovici piissimi conjux, et injustum machinata divortium nupsit ei, cum tamen haberet in fama privata quod Gaufrido patri suo lectum Ludovici participasset. *De Nugis Curialium*, p. 226.

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Henry the Second meant in his younger days to go on crusade is fairly demonstrated by the lines of Joseph of Exeter:

Tuque, oro, tuo da, maxime, vati
Ire iter inceptum, Trojamque aperire jacentem:
Te sacræ assument acies, divinaque bella,
Tunc dignum majore tuba; tunc pectore toto
Nitar, et immensum mecum spargere per orbem.

But the elder Henry, like the elder Galahad, was of dubious quality for a holy warrior. So the younger Henry should have been his substitute in the crusade, as the younger Galahad was destined to achieve the Graal quest, of which his father was unworthy. But Henry died, and Richard, a man of military genius, but utterly incapable as a statesman, was left to carry on war against Saladin.

IV.

THE ENVIRONMENT.

The environing conditions that made the sudden development of the chief Arthur romances possible in a few years between 1162 and 1182 appear to have been:

First—An awakened attention to the popular lore of the British race in Brittany and elsewhere. Enough and more than enough has been written by various critics on this point.¹

Second—An attention equally alert to the boundless novelty of the strange world in the East which was opened to the astonished eyes

1. See RHYS and NUTT, as previously cited; also CAMPBELL, *Tales of the West Highlands*. In contrast with these, Sir GEORGE COX, in his book on Aryan mythology, dwelt on classical analogies, it must be confessed with much acuteness and considerable success.

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of Europe by the crusades.² The most noteworthy single literary event of the twelfth century was the translation of the Koran into Latin in 1143³ by two monkish scholars, one of whom was an Englishman. This fact lends great weight to the opinion of those critics⁴

2. "The riches of Asia, when brought into Europe, soon gave birth to a desire for the cultivation of the arts which embellish life, and of the sciences which double the faculties of man." MICHAUD, *Hist. of the Crusades*, Engl. Transl., III., p. 330.

3. Machumetis Sarracenorum vita ac doctrina omnis, quæ et Ismaelitarum lex, et Alcoranum dicitur, ex Arabica lingua ante CCCC annos in Latinam translata. . . . Item Philippi Melanchthonis viri doctiss. praemonitio ad lectorem, etc. BASIL, 1543.

Machumetis ejusque successorum vitæ doctrina, ac ipse Alcoran, quæ D. Petrus, abbas Clun. ex Arabica lingua, in Lat. transferri curavit, cum Phil. Melanchthonis praemonitione, etc. TIGURI (?), 1550.

Huet declares the translation to be of no value whatever. Fabricius flatly contradicts him. No doubt both, from different points of view, were influenced by the name of Melanchthon. Morhof remarks that no version of the Koran previous to his day could be trusted. *Polyhistor*, III., 5, 1, 22.

4. This opinion is mentioned by Wilson in his notes to Dunlop.

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who derive the account of the miraculous table in the story of the Graal directly from the following passage in the Koran:

“When the apostles said, ‘O Jesus, Son of Mary! is thy Lord able to send down to us a table from heaven?’ he said, ‘Fear God, if ye be believers;’ and they said, ‘We desire to eat therefrom that our hearts may be at rest, and that we may know that what thou hast told us is the truth, and that we may be thereby amongst the witnesses.’ Said Jesus, the Son of Mary, ‘O God, our Lord! send down to us a table from heaven to be to us as a festival — to the first of us and to the last, and a sign from Thee — and grant us provision, for Thou art the best of providers.’ God said, ‘Verily I am about to send it down to you.’ ”⁵

This passage is connected even more closely with incidents of the graal fiction by

5. Palmer’s translation of the Koran, *Sacred Books of the East*, VI., p. 114.

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the Mohammedan tradition, which adds that when the table descended, it bore a covered dish, in which lay a fish cooked and ready to be eaten. All who ate of this fish were rejuvenated and healed of all their infirmities. The fish as a symbol in universal use among early Christians is known to every reader of *Quo Vadis?*

Not to be troubled with a mass of instances, it will suffice to remark that the word "Sarras," as the name of a city, is plainly an effort to give the Saracens a geographical point of origin. Sarrazin⁶ was a common

6. For example, in Herber's paraphrase, a little later than the Arthur romances, of Jehan de Hauteselve's Latin *Dolopathos*,

"Bien as oit de la roïne
Sibile, ki fut sarrazine."

Sarrasin remains the accepted orthography in the French language.

Nihil enim aliud notat vox Saracenorum quam populos orientales, licet vulgus eos a Sara autumet. HADRIANUS RELANDUS, *Dissertationes Miscellaneae*, pars secunda, p. 80.

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orthography in former times. Mandeville,⁷ in locating this city in Media, probably depended upon the Graal romance for his information. Galahad, or rather Galaad, as it appears in the old French of the romances, is the usual form, not only there, but in Latin, of the name that appears as Gilead⁸ in the English Bible. It points to a forgotten detail of English aspirations⁹ in the crusades.

7. Of course "Sir John Maundevile" is taken here, like "Sir Thomas Malory," to be a mere pen name, and his book as a compilation not only of travelers' tales, but of information from all kinds of books, ancient and modern, a work of the closet and not the writing of a man who had traveled.

8. Still retained in modern French. The name figured geographically in a significant way in the legend of Elijah, as exemplified in the chronicle of Godfrey of Viterbo, who was contemporary with the early Arthurian romancers: Elias de tribu Aaron, cum in utero matris suae esset in Galaad, Sobi pater ejus somnium vidit, quod nascente Elia, viri candidis utentes vestimentis, involvebant eum candidis, et ei pro cibis ignem ad nutrimentum subministrabant. *Pantheon*, pars xiii., STRUVII PISTORII, *Rerum Germanicarum Scriptores*, II., p. 223.

9. Probably the founding of a kingdom east of the

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Third — The immense expansion of the educational system of Europe, causing troops of students to rove from city to city and country to country¹⁰ in search of famous schools and instructors. The intercommunication that resulted among the students gathered at great schools led to wider and wider acquaintance on the part of each with the history, traditions and literature of other countries than his own. For this reason, whole fields of literary effort — the vision literature that culminated in Dante's *Divina Commedia*, the great group

Jordan and south of Antioch and Syria, in the region sacred to the memory of Elijah, where he was expected to return to the world for the final conflict with Antichrist. This would have been all of one piece with the return of Arthur to wield the empire of Christendom.

10. "The two great parent universities [Paris and Bologna] arose about the same time — during the last thirty years of the twelfth century. They arose out of different sides of that wonderful deepening and broadening of the stream of human culture which may be called the Renaissance of the twelfth century." RASHDALL, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, I., p. 19.

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of Irish Voyages, the magical romances of Virgil and others,—all came into the general view of Europe about the close of the century.

Fourth — The rapid advance of the vernacular languages, and particularly French, to literary utility. This advance¹¹ preceded the mania for story-telling. Provence, which taught all the mediæval nations the art of poetry, cared nothing for tales¹² until after its literature began to decline. These were developed in Northern France, in England and Germany. Of course there is a question

11. This is substantiated by the ordinary histories of literature.

12. "If we diligently examine their history, we shall find that the poetry of the first troubadours consisted in satires, moral fables, allegories and sentimental sonnets. . . . The troubadours who composed metrical romances form a different species, and should be considered separately. And this latter class seems to have commenced at a later period, not till after the crusades had effected a great change in the manners and ideas of the Western world." HAZLITT'S WARTON, II., p. 148.

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of precedence between the epopee of Charlemagne and that of Arthur.¹³ But if the Song of Roland was sung at the Battle of Hastings,¹⁴ there seems to be little need of further discussion, for that battle took place more than three-quarters of a century before the Arthurian muse chipped a single crack in her shell.¹⁵ And the Roland song was already old. The conclusion must be that the Charlemagne tales, probably told in the first place of an earlier court than his,¹⁶ existed as folk-

13. DUNLOP treats the Arthur tales as if their priority was unquestionable.

14. "In William's army was a valiant warrior named Taillefer, who was distinguished no less for the minstrel arts. . . . He . . . animated his countrymen with songs in praise of Charlemagne and Roland" and Oliver "qui mourruent en Rainschevaux." PERCY, *Reliques*, WHEATLEY's edition, I., pp. 354 and 403. BURNEY, *History of Music*, II., pp. 275-280.

15. That is, if written evidence only is to be depended upon. With the aid of myth and oral tradition, the case for the Arthur epic can be stated somewhat differently.

16. Charlemagne is said by his biographers to have

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poetry before they were amplified by professional singers and writers, while there is no evidence that the earliest Arthur fiction, namely, the Graal story, had any basis in folklore, though popular material was freely used in concocting it.

Fifth — The aspirations of the papacy toward universal supremacy. The origin of the Arthurian cycle, so far as it can now be ascertained, must be dated near the middle of the twelfth century. At that time the heat was still felt of the fierce struggle of Alexander II.,¹⁷ Gregory VII.,¹⁸ and other less able Popes, with the temporal power. In fact, there might be men still alive who could remember Gregory. His power, both as papal

made a collection in writing of ancient Frankish songs, which was destroyed by his too pious son.

17. It was this Pope who began the struggle with the Emperor Henry IV. that culminated at Canossa, and centuries later furnished Bismarck one of his most eloquent speeches.

18. See BRYCE, *Holy Roman Empire*, pp. 158 seq.,

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adviser and as Pope, was intimately associated with the reform of clerical manners as well as the enlargement of the papal authority.¹⁹ In the ascetic purity of life, so urgently advocated and so indifferently exemplified throughout the earliest Arthur tales, is reflected this influence, which permeated all

217, 389. For a poetical account of Gregory's exile and death see the poem of William of Apulia, lib V., Leibnitz Script. Rerr. Brunsw., I., p. 616:

“——— quem nec persona nec auri
Unquam flexit amor———.”

19. One of the great struggles of the time was in behalf of celibacy —

“Namque sacerdotes, Levitae, clericus omnis
Hac regione palam se conjugio sociabant,”

wrote William of Apulia in the eleventh century; and still, near the close of the twelfth, the ribald Goliards were ringing the changes on the same theme:

“Non est Innocentius, immo nocens vere
Qui quod Deus docuit, studet abolere;
Jussit enim Dominus foeminas habere,
Sed hoc noster pontifex jussit prohibere.”

These lines were credited to Walter Map, but probably he was not the author.

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Europe. Gregory died an exile from his see, the guest of Robert Guiscard, a Norman ruler of Sicily. He felt that he had been persecuted to the death for his effort to purify Christendom.²⁰ The authors of the earliest Arthur tales must have envisaged the contests of the times in much the same way. Thus the struggle of the papacy and the empire seems to be allegorized in the well-known passage where the Church in the form of a lion is beset by a dragon. The subsequent romantic explanation of the allegory is as fictitious as that which it interprets. All must be taken as an effort to read the facts of the twelfth century according to the ideas supposed to be proper to the fourth.

It is a misdirection of thought to imagine that the Arthur romances were inspired by Henry the Second as a defense against papal

20. "I have loved justice and hated iniquity, therefore I die in exile."

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encroachments.²¹ If he or the romancers had meant, in looking back upon a feigned antiquity, to claim superiority for the British Church, the point would have been made clear even to the proverbial wayfarer. On the contrary, the tales emphasize the spiritual authority²² of the Church. But they also aim to put the Angevin-English monarchs into the same rank, as regarded the papacy, as was held by the Carolingians because of the mutual good offices of Charlemagne and the Roman See. If this pretended history had come to be looked on as real history, it is easy to see how that would have contributed to the Angevin notion of an empire, consolidated in equal alliance with the Church, from which not only evil living, but all heresy would be

21. Paulin Paris was primarily responsible for this purely mythical view of the primitive British Church.

22. "Holy Church," a phrase common in the romances, was utterly foreign to the ancient communions that were under the Johannine ritual.

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forever excluded. The aim was to make the fiction even more convincing than history by giving it the vogue of an inspired writing.²³ Thus the Graal story in its various forms is in part a redaction of apocrypha which still retained their credit in the twelfth century despite the censure of Pope Gelasius;²⁴ and in addition to this interweaving of revered legend, claimed a divine original written by Jesus Christ himself.²⁵ Preposterous as this

23. Probably the romancers come the nearest to downright blasphemy when they reckon the descent of Lancelot du Lac in the eighth generation from the family of Jesus Christ. They are not even careful to make it clear that Lancelot could not be a direct descendant of the Saviour. The case is somewhat similar to the American trick of mentioning persons as descendants of Washington.

24. Gelasius I., whose pontificate lasted from 492 to 496. The Gospel of Nicodemus, one of the books much used by the romancers, can be read in the English *Apocryphal New Testament*, which now has the imprimatur of the late DeWitt Talmage. *Vindicta Salvatoris*, a Greek fiction, is printed in TISCHENDORF'S *Evangelia Apocrypha*.

25. The claim was made in the book itself, and it

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was, it showed that somebody between the Bay of Biscay and the Roman Wall was up on the secret practices of both State and Church in earlier times.

That Henry the Second resented the direct interference of the papacy in the affairs of England, as in the famous case of Battle Abbey,²⁶ or that, comparatively late in his reign, he had a fatal controversy with the Church in the person of Becket,²⁷ does not

was added that Jesus wrote nothing else. This statement seems to fix a date line for the apocryphal correspondence between Christ and Abgarus in Western literature.

26. Adrian IV. had interfered in a quarrel between the Bishop of Chichester and the Abbot of Battle, enjoining the latter to obey his diocesan. When the case came up for trial before the King, the fact was disclosed that the Bishop had appealed to the Pope. He made an angry and apparently profane speech to the Bishop, which the monks expurgated in their chronicle. *Chronicon de Bello*, pp. 91-2. Other instances in Henry's reign, of earlier and later years, will occur to the reader.

27. The main incidents in the affair of Becket are too well known to require recapitulation in this place.

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bear on the question at all. The whole body of Arthurian romance, so far as it could interest him, was already in writing, and had become the property of the trouvères, to be wrought by them into any form they desired. His penance for the killing of Becket, unwilling though it was, suffices to show that his idea of the relations between Church and State was still what it had been. This idea was practically equivalent to the theory advanced by Gervase of Tilbury,²⁸ near Henry's

28. Duo sunt quibus hic mundus regitur, sacerdotium et regnum. . . . Uterque divinae legis executor suum justitiae debitum cuique tribuit, malos coërcendo et bonos remunerando. Quippe divisum imperium cum Jove Caesar habens terrena moderator et lutea figmenta judicat, haec probans, ista conterens. . . . Ecce quod duobus rectoribus mundus iste subjicitur, et tamen a manu sacerdotali Rex principatus sui unctionem habet, et ab utrorumque domino uterque suam recipit potestatem. . . . Constantini gesta si memoramus, ab ipso collata legitur in partes occidentales tantum Sylvestro. Orientalis regio facta est caput imperii. Licet vicario Christi Petro in tempore ejusque successoribus jus regis in occidente constituisset, diademate Caesaris ceterisque

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own times, by William of Ockam²⁹ in the next century, and consecrated by Dante in his *De Monarchia*³⁰—that is, of a Church

insignibus Sylvestro collatis ad gloriam: Non tamen imperii nomen aut imperium ipsum transire voluit imperator in Sylvestrum: quod sibi ac successoribus suis conservavit intactum, sola sede mutata, non dignitate. Unde primus Karolus magnus a Graecorum ditione legitur recessisse, monitu Gregorii papae, ut i. T. de imperio. Quis ergo major in terrenis, qui dat, an qui accipit? Profecto qui dat autor est honoris, non qui accipit. Deus autor imperii, imperator autor papalis triumphi. GERVAS., *Otia Imperialia*. Introduction.

29. "In agreement with the stricter division of his order [the Spirituales, a faction of the Franciscans], he [Ockam] had always deduced from the humility of Christ and of the apostles the conclusion that the Pope ought not to possess temporal power. To this was added later the conviction that as the Pope must be subject to princes in worldly matters, he ought to be subject to the Church in spiritual matters. In this opinion he was confirmed more and more by the party spirit shown by the incumbent of the Papal chair [John XXII.] against the Spirituales." ERDMANN, *Hist. Phil.*, Engl. Transl., I., p. 503.

30. Compare with the opinions of Gervase and Ockam, Dr. Schaff's compact summary of Dante's *Monarchia*: "He proves in three parts, first, that there must be a universal empire; secondly, that this monarchy

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wholly spiritual and spiritually supreme, and a State (that is, a monarch — Louis the Fourteenth was not the first King who thought, “ I am the State,”) supreme, even over the hierarchy, in temporal affairs. Given a State in which purity of life was maintained, from which all doctrine condemned by the Church was excluded, and there would be no excuse, so long as the world lasted, for papal inter-

belongs, of right and by tradition, to the Roman people; and, thirdly, that the monarchy depends immediately upon God and not upon the Pope. The conflicting interests of society in his judgment require an impartial arbiter, since kings of limited territories are always liable to be influenced by selfish motives and aims. A universal monarch alone can insure universal peace. The right of Rome is based on the fact that Christ was born under the reign of Augustus and died under Tiberius. The universal rule of God is divided between the Emperor and the Pope; the Emperor is supreme by divine right in temporal things, and is to guide the human race to temporal felicity, in accordance with the teaching of philosophy; the Pope also by divine right is supreme in spiritual and ecclesiastical things, and is to guide men to eternal life, in accordance with the truth of Revelation.”

SCHAFF, *Literature and Poetry*, p. 320.

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ference. The refinements of Greek speculation, however, as applied to theology in the supposititious works of Dionysius the Areopagite³¹ and in the compilations of John of Damascus,³² in contact with Western literalism, made it a superhuman task to suppress heresy, and so there is in the environment of the earliest Graal romances a most important factor,—

Sixth — The nascent scholastic philosophy. Ever since John Erigena, at the court

31. For the influence of the author of the works under this name, see the larger histories of philosophy. His authority as to the usages of the Eucharist is shown by the following liturgical note: Εἰς δὲ τὸ λοιπὸν, τίθεμεν τὰς λοιπὰς μερίδας τῶν Ἀγίων ὡς οὐ πλείους, οὐδ' ἐλάττους, ἀλλ' ἐννέα τιθέμεθα, κατὰ μίμησιν τῶν οὐρανίων ταγμάτων. Ὡσπερ γὰρ ἔκεισε, κατὰ τὸν πολλὸν ἐν θεολογίᾳ Διονύσιον τὸν Ἀρεοπαγίτην, εἰς ἐννέα τάγματα πᾶσα τούτων ἡ στρατιὰ διήρηται, οὕτω κἀνταῦθα θεοπρεπέστατα ὁ αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐν ἀμφοτέροις τυγχάνων διατελεῖ Ἰησοῦς. κ. τ. λ. *Euchologion Mega*, p. 46.

32. Spanheim was the first, perhaps, to point out that Peter Lombard, the father of Western Realists, gathered his material and drew his method from the works of John of Damascus. MORHOFF, *Polyhistor.*, II., I., xiv., 1.

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of Charles the Bald,³³ had stirred up the question of the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the elements of the Eucharist, a fire had smoldered in ecclesiastical Europe that was bound to break out some time in a general conflagration. To theologians may be left the dispute as to the antiquity of the doctrine of transubstantiation. But it is plain that between the opinions held by Erigena, similar, at least in a general way, to those of most modern Protestants, and those of Paschasius Radbertus,³⁴ who reduced the Catholic belief to dogmatic form, there could be no peace. With the spread of education in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the prob-

33. Erigena figures largely in all histories of philosophy. But it is disputed whether or not he was the author of the book that made most of the trouble for later theologians.

34. Paschasius is barely mentioned in Erdmann's history of philosophy. His book was entitled *De Corpore et Sanguine Christi*. He flourished about the middle of the ninth century.

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lem became the one unfailing characteristic of theological controversy. Of all the sects accused of heresy in those centuries, not one omitted to emphasize its disbelief in the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist. On every other point they varied, but in this they were a unit. Neo-manichæans, Gandulfians, Bogomils, Tanchelinians, Petrobrussians, Henriicians, Arnaldists, Apostolians, Cathari, Waldenses, Almaricans, Albigenses, Paulicians and Lollards,³⁵ all of whom sprang into notice in the twelfth century, agreed in denying this doctrine of the Church of Rome, no matter how widely they diverged from one another in the statement of their own respective views.

35. In this summary, Noël Alexandre's ecclesiastical history, edition of Mansi, has been consulted. But all the church historians agree on the main point, though they differ like heretics on details.

V

BERENGAR OF TOURS

Over all these towered the host of Sacramentarians, who refused to be shut out of the Church, who had absolutely no quarrel with it except on the question of the Eucharist, and in the van of the Sacramentarians was one of the most remarkable men in the whole range of ecclesiastical history. Berengar of Tours¹ lived ninety years, and died in good repute with the Church. Men were burned at the stake before his time, in his time and after his time, who gave the hierarchy infinitely less trouble than he gave it. The whole eleventh century was his century, theologi-

1. Born 998; died 1088.

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cally considered, and the twelfth was under his shadow. Condemned over and over again, he absented himself from councils and synods when he could, refused to answer if obliged to be present, and when in peril of his life recanted,² confessedly under duress, only to renew his preaching as soon as he was free. Twice, at least, he went to Rome, argued his case before the Pope in council, and escaped with his life, and even with letters of protection³ to secular princes, who were more virulent against him than the most bigoted of churchmen. For a half century he maintained his position in face of the ablest controversialists of the time; and this he did almost alone, for his followers, though deeply

2. ERDMANN, l. c., I., p. 301: "For this double subjection to the fear of men he blamed himself until his death."

3. Dedit ipsi [Berengario] et alias literas ad fideles universos, quibus ipsum haereticum appellari prohibuit. NOËL ALEXANDRE, l. c., Vol. XIII., p. 486.

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attached to him, developed no great minds to sustain him in his arduous conflict.

Berengar finished his life where he began it, at Tours; but, meanwhile, he had disseminated ⁴ his opinions over Normandy, Anjou, Provence and Western Germany. He very nearly persuaded the Duke of Normandy,⁵ William the Conqueror, to come out on his side, while Lanfranc,⁶ who was to be the first primate of all England under the Norman power, was long suspected of favoring his views, and only dispelled this suspicion by a ruthless attack on him. His bitterest foe was Fulk,⁷ Count of Anjou, who would unquestionably have burned him, had it not been for

4. Berengarius plane quamvis ipse sententiam correxerit, omnes tamen, quos ex totis terris depravaverat, convertere nequivit. WILLIAM OF MALMESBURY, Ed. HARDY, p. 465, quoted also by Alexandre.

5. ALEXANDRE, VIII., p. 474.

6. Ibid, p. 467.

7. This was Fulk the Fourth, great-grandfather of Henry the Second.

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direct and personal commands from the Pope, Gregory VII.,⁸ who was not to be trifled with. But Fulk's enmity is a significant fact in the evolution of the Graal romance, for it made the real presence a family question with Henry the Second. A great part of the empire over which the King of England claimed sovereignty in the twelfth century was saturated with very recent and very vigorous traditions of Berengar and his teachings, while the King's own tradition as a prince of the House of Anjou made it a point of honor with him to oppose Sacramentarianism wherever he found it. And this he did with severity.

8. Gallios repetenti Berengario, Gregorius VII., apostolicae protectionis literas dedit ad Redulphum Turo-nensem archiepiscopum, et Eusebium episcopum Andega-vensem ut eum sua vice a Fulconis comitis Andegavensis infestationibus tuerenter. NOËL ALEXANDRE, XIII., p. 486.

VI.

THE REAL PRESENCE

While Normandy and Anjou were troubled by heresies, England was free from serious religious disturbance, and to the close of the twelfth century remained, from the dogmatic point of view, a model of faithfulness. Hume¹ mentions but one eruption of heresy in Henry the Second's time, and this was confined to a group of foreign wanderers. Walter Map,² who knew a good deal about heretics and rather liked some of them,³ was fain to find

1. Probably Hume refers to the incident given in detail by Map.

2. Map, in *De Nugis Curialium*, gave a long account of the Waldenses, the result of his own personal investigation at Rome. P. 64, seq.

3. Speaking of the Waldenses, Map remarked: "Sunt certe temporibus nostris, licet a nobis damnati

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them for the most part in his frequent journeys to the continent. He particularly mentioned the fact that of the Publicans⁴ or Paterini, a widespread sect of Paulician origin, only sixteen had been found in England, and these had been promptly driven out by the King. Among these Publicans was to be found the sole open outbreak in the England of those days against the accepted doctrine of the Eucharist. Walter also notes the fact that Henry was equally energetic in his efforts to put down heresy in the parts of his empire outside⁵ of England. If he desired

et derisi, qui fidem servare velint, etsi ponantur ad rationem, ut dudum ponant animas suas pro pastore suo domino Jesu; sed nescio quo zelo ductis vel conductis." P. 65.

4. In Anglia nondum venerunt nisi sedecim, qui praecepto regis Henrici secundi adusti et virgis caesi disparuerunt in Normanniam. P. 62. Non accipiunt de corpore Christi et sanguine, pane benedicto nos derident. P. 61.

5. Rex noster etiam Henricus secundus ab omnibus terris suis arcet haereseos novae damnosissimam sectam, etc. P. 60.

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to hold England up as a model to the other regions under his sway, how better could this be done than by showing that it had once been the resting place of the *tryblion* out of which the Lord and his disciples had eaten the Last Supper, and that the quest of this sacred and miraculous vessel had in remote times absorbed the attention of British warriors? Thus, in addition to other political and ecclesiastical aims, the Arthur tales, by the conditions of the times,—twelfth century times, remember, not the times of the real 'Arthur, a point which is regularly ignored by many persons who write on the subject,—were directed to the strenuous support of that doctrine of the Church which was most prominent in the twelfth century.⁶ For the sake of illustration a single passage may be taken

6. A single glance at any of the great ecclesiastical histories will show that transubstantiation was the one theme of speculative interest. It rivaled even the quarrel between the empire and the papacy.

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from Map's⁷ story of the Graal as Englished by the translators who gave themselves collectively the pen name, Sir Thomas Malory:

“And anon light a voice among them said, ‘They that ought not to sit at the table of our Lord Jesus Christ arise; for now shall very knights be fed,’ so they went thence, all save King Pelleas and Eliazar his son, the which were holy men, and a maid which was his niece: and so these three fellows [Sir Galahad, Sir Perceval and Sir Bors] and they three were there, and no more. Anon they saw knights all armed come in at the hall door, and did off their helms and their harness, and said unto Sir Galahad, ‘Sir, we have bled sore to be with you at this table, where the holy meat shall be parted.’ Then said he, ‘Ye be welcome, but whence be ye?’ So three of them said they were of Gaul,⁸ and

7. Even if it can be shown that the translators here used a poetical original, still the substance is of Map's invention.

8. Gaul was conquered by Arthur, according to the legend in Geoffrey's history.

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other three said they were of Ireland,⁹ and other three said they were of Denmark.¹⁰ So as they sate thus, there came a bed of wood out of a chamber, the which four gentlewomen brought; and in the bed lay a good man sick, and a crown of gold upon his head, and there in the midst of the place they sat him down and went their way again. Then he lift up his head and said, 'Sir Galahad, Knight, ye be welcome, for much have I desired your coming, for in which pain and anguish as ye see have I been long; but now I trust to God that the time is come that my pain shall be allayed, that I shall pass out of this world, so as it was promised me long ago.' Therewith a voice said, 'There be two among you that be not in the quest of the Sancgreal, and therefore depart ye.'¹¹ Then

9. Ireland was invaded by Arthur in fiction, and was now claimed by Henry in fact.

10. Both Norway and Denmark were said to have been overrun by Arthur's armies. It is curious that nobody has dwelt in detail on the manifest fact that Geoffrey appropriated in these affairs the biography of Alfred.

11. That is, a new test was to be set up of fitness

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King Pelleas and his son departed; and therewith it seemed them that there came a man and four angels from heaven clothed in the likeness of bishops, and [the man] had a cross in his hand: and the four angels bear him up in a chair, and set him down before the table of silver, whereupon the Sancgreal was, and it seemed that he had in the midst of his forehead letters that said, 'See ye, here, Joseph, the first bishop of Christendom, the same which our Lord succoured in the city of Sarras in the spiritual place.' Then the knights marvelled, for that bishop was dead more than three hundred years before. 'Oh, knights,' said he, 'marvel not; for I was sometime an earthly man.' With that they heard the chamber door open, and there they saw angels, and two bear candles of wax, and the third a towel,¹² and the fourth a spear,¹³ which bled marvellously, that the drops fell

to partake of the Lord's Supper. According to Arthur romancers, the Eucharist should have been confined to the sacerdotal and military orders.

12. An allusion to the Veronica.

13. This allusion appears to be to Longinus, men-

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within a bier, the which he held in his other hand. And then they set their candles upon the table, and the third put the towel upon the vessel, and the fourth set the holy spear even upright upon the vessel. And then the bishop made semblance as though he would have gone to the consecration of the mass; and then he took a wafer, which was made in the likeness of bread, and at the lifting up there came a figure in the likeness of a child, and the visage was as red and as bright as any fire, and smote itself into that bread, so that they all saw the bread was formed of fleshy man."

It may be left to experts in ecclesiastical history to say whether or not this narrative could have been invented before the middle or after the close of the twelfth century.

In accordance with the usual revulsion in human affairs, the conditions of the thirteenth

tioned in the Gospel of Nicodemus as the soldier who pierced the side of Christ with his lance.

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century were foreign to the production of a work like the Graal story in its original form. The reform of Gregory had spent its force.¹⁴ The high ideals with which the Templars and Hospitallers began were forgotten.¹⁵ Ecclesiasticism was now dominated by the conflicting orders of St. Dominic and St. Francis.¹⁶ The Franciscans, particularly through the eloquence of the youthful and enthusiastic Duns Scotus,¹⁷ and mindful of the victory of

14. In the case of Innocent III. and those who followed him, there was hardly a pretense of the stern rectitude of Gregory VII. In a poetical satire respecting the quarrel of Innocent III. with the Emperor Otto the Fourth, which was probably written by an Englishman, Rome is represented as saying to the Pope:

“Innocentius es, ita quod non privet *in* immo,
Augmentet potius, valdeque Nocentius esse
Dicaris, quia totius mundi es nocumentum.”

—Liebnitz, l. c., Tom. II., p. 532.

15. See Map's essays on these orders, as previously cited.

16. This domination began in popular favor, but it was strengthened by the victory of the friars over the universities.

17. The satire of Butler in *Hudibras* has given Duns

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John of Damascus in the East,¹⁸ began the age-long effort to force the dogma of the immaculate conception upon the Church, while the Dominicans arrayed themselves in a fierce opposition¹⁹ that was not to be overcome till the middle of the nineteenth century.²⁰ The university era was fairly opened,²¹ and criticism of the doctrine of the real presence, so far as it became public, was confined to the subtleties of scholastic philosophers.²² Her-

Scotus a bad name. But he was a remarkable man, especially in view of the fact that he died at the early age of forty-three.

18. John of Damascus is represented in the Roman Breviary with only two discourses; but these suffice to show how he identified his name with the homage to the Virgin. In the Greek Church his renown is very great.

19. The scandal of the fraudulent miracles at Berne in 1507 belongs to the history of this controversy.

20. At the Œcumenical Council summoned by Pius IX. in the Vatican, 1870.

21. RASHDALL, *Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, dates the *Studium Generale* at Oxford 1167, and Cambridge 1209.

22. Many doctrines condemned as heretical in the thirteenth century originated with university professors.

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esy took up new grievances. Not that the subject of transubstantiation was forgotten. In fact, as the reformation of the sixteenth century demonstrated, nearly the half of Christendom was the mortal foe of the dogma. But it ceased to be a subject of immediate interest and general discussion, such as it had been for the better part of two centuries.

Hence the story of the Graal in any of its forms, whether as to its origin and migrations, or as an object of knightly quest, could no more have been imagined in the thirteenth century than in the twentieth. That the story was capable of being worked over is another question. It was rewritten then and afterwards, and no doubt will continue to be done anew to the end of time.

VII

WALTER MAP

If the Arthur stories had been in the first instance a natural outcrop of the folk spirit, it is not credible that they would have begun with the super-imposed graal episode. More likely they would have opened with the tale of *Tristan*, which, be it of British or of continental origin, is as thorough a folk product as the ballads of Robin Hood. But with the graal the cycle began, and the only question is, who was the first to write the graal episode in any of its forms? Wolfram von Eschenbach is responsible for the figure of a Provençal troubadour, or rather joglar, whom he calls Kyot, supposed to mean Guy or Guyot. But Provençal poets did not compose long narrative poems until their art fell

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into its decline. Moreover, they did not write in Languedoïl. If it is necessary to contrive an hypothesis making this Languedocian of Wolfram's an Angevin or a Northern French trouvère, he might just as well be dropped at the outset as a mere name.¹ Wolfram, as some of his poetry showed to an expert like Hueffer,² was well versed in the language and metrical art of Provence. But his German contemporaries were not. He could tell them anything he liked. Very likely the name Kyot represents something very different from Guyot. It is no great stretch of probabilities in palæography to account for it as

1. His existence is of no importance either way. If he was real, he was as much addicted to the cult of the House of Anjou as Map himself, and if he is a mere figment of the imagination, he leaves no hiatus in the tradition as to the authorship of the legends.

2. "Hence we find that the wonderfully beautiful morning songs, evidently written in imitation of Provençal models by Wolfram von Eschenbach, the great mediaeval German poet, are actually called Wächterlieder, or sentinel songs." HUEFFER, *The Troubadours*, p. 87.

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a reading of some abbreviation of Walter, Gualtier, such as Guat or Gyat. Outside of Wolfram's poem Kyot is unknown. The only authors of Arthur romances before the end of the twelfth century are Map,³ who has already been mentioned, Robert de Borron,⁴ and Chrestien de Troyes.⁵ There need be no hes-

3. The tradition of Map's authorship, which had been attacked, was rehabilitated once for all by Sir Frederick Madden and Paulin Paris.

4. Who was secretary to Gautier de Montfaucon, and as he could write, most likely a cleric. He went to Palestine as a crusader, probably under Richard Coeur de Lion or Philip Augustus, and his writings appear to have preceded that event. There was no age limit in the crusading hosts. The discrepancy in style and matter that is observed by some critics between the opening parts and the conclusion of works attributed to him is probably accounted for by supposing that they were begun in youth and finished in old age. This supposition is also the only way of explaining the known fact that he was looked on as a contemporary by three generations of poets and romancers.

5. Chrestien died in 1181. [Some say he was still alive in 1191.] The opinion that the *Perceval* was his last work may be disputed on the ground that he also

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itation in accepting the theory already offered by others that Borron was a collaborator with Map. It is equally possible that Chrestien was influenced by Map in his last work, *The Perceval*, which must have been interrupted by his death, as he left it unfinished. His other pieces are of minor importance.

From 1162 till the close of the century, Map⁶ was the foremost man of letters in England, and his relation to the court put him in a position to tell others what to write. He was as well known in the continental parts of Henry's empire as he was at home. Map's position as overseer in the whole affair accounts for what would otherwise be unaccountable—for example, the dragging of

left *Le Chevalier au Lion*, a poem on Lancelot, unfinished. But at least the effort to compose two elaborate poems at the same time gives an impression of some external influence that required the poet to be in haste.

6. If the question were one of literary style, Map would have to give way to John of Salisbury. But John made far less noise among his contemporaries than Map.

WALTER MAP

the graal motive into the Perceval romance, which without this addition is a manifest variant under Hahn's famous *Aryan Exposure and Return* formula.⁷ Much as Map wrote, he said of himself that he was more of a talker than a writer.⁸ With this confession is to be linked the fact that his contributions to the cycle of Arthur romances were in prose. We must remember that verse was throughout the mediæval period reckoned as the vehicle of fiction, while prose carried with it a conviction of truth. On this prejudice was based the dislike which Joseph of Exeter,⁹ a few years after Map's time, professed for Homer, and his preference for Dictys and Dares. Godfrey of Viterbo, in his *Pantheon*,¹⁰

7. The principal variation being that the hero is not exposed, but concealed, to evade the fate that awaits him.

8. "You have written much, I have talked a great deal," he is reported to have said to Gerald de Barri.

9. This poet should be mentioned with respect. He furnished the motto for Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*.

10. This elaborate work, a very creditable perform-

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a compendium of universal history, alternating prose with verse, was careful to put certain parts in prose only, lest in metre they should be disputed. The prose romancers of the thirteenth century discredited their poetical predecessors by the same argument,¹¹ while in the very act of filching their material. From these instances it is plain that to a work put forth almost in the form of a supplement to the New Testament history rhythm and rhyme would have been fatal. They would have been considered *prima facie* evidence of forgery. So the Arthur stories, begun, as they were, with what was properly the conclusion, also violated the natural order by being first set down in prose before they got into verse.

That tradition is certainly trustworthy,

ance for the times, is to be read in STRUVIUS' edition of PISTORIUS, *Rerum Germanicarum Scriptores*, Tom. II.

11. WILSON'S DUNLOP, *History of Prose Fiction*, Vol. I., p. 146.

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since it corresponds to the necessities of the case, which attributes to Map¹² the *Quest of the Graal*, the *Book of Lancelot du Lac* and the *Death of Arthur*. It is also probable that to him is due the graal history in both its shorter and longer forms. Borron turned these into verse and wrote the *Book of Merlin*. Lucas de Gast¹³ began *The Tristan*, and Chrestien *The Perceval*, in which the Angevin genealogical and political motives were a prominent feature. But the moral, ecclesiastical and political motives of the cycle are practically complete in the works of Map.

It is objected that Map wrote in Latin. This is, as Wright has remarked, a misapprehension,¹⁴ so far as the Arthur stories are concerned. It is also objected that if Wolfram owed his original to a priest, he would have

12. WRIGHT, *Biographia Britannica Literaria*, Vol. II., p. 303.

13. Ibid, p. 311.

14. Ibid, p. 304.

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given a priestly title and would not have spoken of Master Kyot.¹⁵ But it happens that Map, though he rose to the dignity of an archdeacon in the Church, betrayed all his life a fondness for the title of Master.¹⁶ It was evidently the habitual form of address mutual between him and his friend, Giraldus Cambrensis, and he is called Maistre Gautiers Map¹⁷ in the concluding paragraph of the ancient French prose *Mort Artus*.

15. "Si se taist ore Maistre Gautiers Map del' estoire de Lancelot," etc., from a manuscript in the British Museum quoted by WRIGHT.

"Les livres que Maistres Gautiers Maup fist," PAULIN PARIS, *Les Manuscrits de la Bibliothèque du Roi*, Tom. I., p. 139.

"Le livre de Missire Lancelot du Lac le quel translata Maistre Gautier Map," Ibid, p. 147.

16. No doubt the title in Map's case is associated with the practice of the universities which made Master a title in the theological faculty and Doctor a title for a graduate in canon law. RASHDALL, op. cit., Vol. I., p. 21.

17. See also the title repeated in other copies of the French romances as cited in a previous note.

WALTER MAP

While Map could easily and frankly assert his authorship of the *Lancelot*, the *Quest*, and the *Morte d'Arthur*, he could not, nor could anybody, claim the original prose history of the Graal as his own.¹⁸ This was deliberately meant to make its way among the apocrypha, and, if possible, to attain an inspired or semi-inspired rank. But the actual inspiration, coming from the court of England, could only be breathed upon a man of letters who was also a courtier, and that was Map. No doubt his work was hasty and confused, a memorandum rather than a finished piece of literature — in fact, all the earliest Arthurian prose has the look of being tumbled together for the use of writers rather than as a permanent gift to the reading world. Even in Latin

18. The usual plan with apocrypha was to attribute them to some well-known personage of primitive Christian times, and then to invent a more or less plausible account of the preservation of the manuscript. In the present case the Saviour himself was made responsible for the fiction.

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Map told stories, often very good ones, in the same huddled, promiscuous style, as any one may find by looking into *De Nugis Curialium*.

VIII

WOLFRAM VON ESCHENBACH

To find a writer who was capable of making genuine literature out of the stories of Arthur's knights and the graal, one has to wait a whole generation and then turn to Germany. Wolfram von Eschenbach,¹ though only a half century later than the earliest of the Arthurian romancers, belonged to a time when the overweening ambition of a Plantagenet Count-King of Anjou and England had already become a matter of indifference. He merely finds Angevin tradition prominent in the fiction as it came to him, and is careful to preserve what gives an air of verity to the

1. Lived until 1220. His poem can now be read in an English translation by Miss Weston.

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narrative. The tempest of controversy over the question of the real presence has passed by.² The quarrel between the powers spiritual and temporal has also fallen into what may be called its chronic state,³ as distinguished from the acute outbreaks of the eleventh century and the twelfth. Politicians may theoretically be Thomists on this point; practically they are Ockamists,⁴ and such they have remained from the thirteenth century to the twentieth. Wolfram, therefore, found nothing to interfere with his view of the Arthur theme as the material of a work of art. Naturally, being a man of genius,

2. If Wolfram von Eschenbach had a preference for any sacrament, it must have been baptism. He certainly mentions that subject at every opportunity.

3. In fact the papacy never again recovered the position it had under Innocent III.

4. Thomas Aquinas imagined a theocratic solution for the dualism of politics. But Ockam, who was a logician pure and simple, saw that the theory of spiritual supremacy was impossible. The physical necessity of human life is against it.

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he produced the first writing worthy of the subject. Proud as he was of his familiarity with the languages of France,⁵ it can not be believed that anything previously written escaped him, and yet it is only here and there that he descended to mere translation. He cast aside the colorless and shadowy Galahad, the perverted Lancelot, the maddened Tristan, left Arthur an almost motionless figure in the background, and only preserved the egotist Gawain⁶ as a foil to the evolution of the simpleton Parzival, the man without learning, like Wolfram himself, but of native force, of latent spirituality, and of manifest destiny. Doubtless there was something in this of the envy of a man wholly unlettered, as Wolfram was,⁷ whose education was all by experience

5. His works reveal this fact.

6. Even thus, Wolfram's Gawain is a finer character than the earlier romances had made of him.

7. There is some reason to suspect that Wolfram, like the troubadour Uc de St. Cyr, rather exaggerated his lack of book learning.

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and word of mouth, provoked at the spread of the new-fangled university learning and the arrogance of its votaries. But there was also the keen insight of a man of genius, who saw that in the cycle of French poems and prose tales, all the heroes could be impersonated by a single figure. All that Galahad, all that Lancelot achieved, all that Bors achieved, Parzival also achieved, with the added interest of his individual story. Instinct, prejudice, conviction, common sense and poetic insight all converged to the certainty that all there was in the Arthur cycle of any epic value could be coördinated with the single figure of Parzival.

IX

WOLFRAM AND WAGNER

It is sometimes said that compassion as a characteristic of *Parsifal* was original with Wagner. But this is not the case. It is true that Wagner, owing to his profound interest and prominent share in the war against vivisection at the time when the *Parsifal* drama began to absorb his creative powers, obtained a higher appreciation of Schopenhauer's definition of pity as the central fact in morals. But Schopenhauer himself was witness to an earlier humane movement, which was crowned in England by laws for the prevention of cruelty to animals, and especially by the noble poem of Coleridge, *The Ancient Mariner*.¹

1. Written in 1798.

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There is a distinct analogy between the shooting of the albatross, as imagined by Coleridge, and the shooting of the swan in *Parsifal*,² even to the unconsciousness of the cruelty involved in the needless crime. But Wolfram

2. Compare these two passages, the first from Coleridge's poem, the second from Wagner's drama:

"God save thee, Ancient Mariner!
From the fiends that plague thee thus!
Why look'st thou so? With my cross-bow
I shot the albatross.

"And the good south wind still blew behind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day for food or play
Came to the mariner's hollo."

Gurnemanz. Bist du's der diesen Schwan erlegte?

Parsifal. Gewiss! Im Fluge treff' ich, was fliegt!

Gurnemanz. Du thatest das? Und bangt' es dich nicht vor der That? . . . Was that dir der treue Schwan? . . . Er war uns hold: was ist er nun dir? Hier schau' her!—hier trafst du ihn, da starrt noch das Blut,—matt hängen die Flüge! das Schneegefieder dunkel befleckt, gebrochen das Aug?—siehst du den Blick? Wirst deiner Sündenthat du inne? Sag knab'; erkennst du deine grosse Schuld? Wie konntest du sie begehn?

Parsifal. Ich wusste sie nicht.

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thought of pity³ as the solution of the doubt and indecision and rebellion against God which marked the immature stage in the career of his Parzival. His defect, as compared with Wagner, is that he did not grasp the whole thought nor extend it to all living things.⁴ But his thought, so far as it goes, is original with him. In the poem of Chrestien of Troyes, the graal is merely a miraculous dish, through which, by means of the question suggested at sight of it, the Fisher-King is to be healed of his wound.⁵ In Wolfram the graal becomes a symbol and touchstone of moral purity, and the graal community,

3. See KARL PANNIER'S introduction to his translation of *Parzival* into modern German.

4. The thought would have been impossible to the mediaeval German in a country still only partially tamed. An American pioneer in the early years of the last century would have had very little sympathy with the notions of either Coleridge, Schopenhauer or Wagner.

5. The poem of Chrestien of Troyes is unfortunately not yet translated into English.

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with its knighthood, appears as the upholder of the Christian ideal of a good life. In Chrestien's poem the question is merely an external act: "Whom serve they with the graal?" In Wolfram the question, at the sight of the sufferings of Amfortas, whose figure is unknown to Chrestien, becomes a duty the omission of which betrays Parzival's lack of sympathy and of the moral maturity which would make him worthy of the graal kingdom.

The whole of that searching of the heart by which Wolfram aims in the contrast between Parzival ignorant, egotistic, rebellious, and Parzival penitent, sympathetic and spiritually alert, is unknown to Chrestien, and is certainly misunderstood and misinterpreted by Wagner. In Wolfram Parzival's conversion is a divine work.⁶ In Wagner it is the

6. In fact, Wolfram would have thoroughly understood the meaning of the word "conversion" implied in an anecdote of John Larkin Lincoln. "I suppose," said a German professor to him, "you can tell us the hour

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result of a woman's kiss ⁷ given with anything but virginal modesty. Psychically Wagner's

and the minute when you were converted?" "Yes," replied Lincoln; "it was the time when religion ceased to be a duty and became a pleasure." Tholuck, the renowned theologian, who stood by, remarked afterwards: "That was a magnificent answer."

7. In the old French romance it is the girl who is modest, while Perceval is an ignorant young ruffian, intent merely on having his own way: Quant pres du pavillon fut arrivé, ouvert le trouva, dedans lequel vit un lict noblement accoutré, sur lequel estoit une pucelle seule endormie, laquelle avoient laissée ses demoyselles qui estoient allé cueiller des fleurs pour le pavillon jolier et parier, comme de ce faire estoient accoutumées. Lors est Perceval du lict de la pucelle approché, courant assez lourdement dessus son cheval: adonc s'est la pucelle assez effrayement eveillée. A laquelle dit Perceval, "Pucelle, Je vous salue, comme ma mere m'a appris, laquelle m'a commandé que jamais pucelle ne trouvasse, que humblement ne la saluasse." Aux paroles du jeune Perceval, se print la pucelle a trembler, car bien luy sembloit qu'il n'estoit gueres sage, comme le monstroient assez son parler; et bien se reputoit folle, que ainsi seule l'avoit trouvée endormie. Puis elle lui dit: "Amy pense bien-tot d'icy te departir, de peur que mes amis ne t'y trouvent, car si icy te rencontroient, il t'en pourroit mal advenir." "Par ma foi," dit Perceval, "jamais d'icy ne partirai que, premier baisée ne vous aye." A quoy repond la pucelle que non fasse, mais que bientot pense

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device is almost ludicrously inadequate;⁸ dramatically it is, of course, very effective. In Wolfram the man who has in him a potential spirituality, in the person of Parzival, is contrasted to sharp advantage with the thorough worldliness of Gawain. Naturally, and with the deepest insight, the poet assigns the victory over the magician Klingsor to this worldly character as the highest achievement of which he is capable. But when Gawain enters on a conflict with Parzival, he suffers a grievous defeat; and this defeat means much

de departir, que ses amis là ne le trouvent. "Pucelle," fait Perceval, "pour votre parler, d'icy ne partirai tant que de vous aye eu ung baiser; car ma mere m'a à ce faire ainsi enseigné." Tant s'est Perceval de la pucelle approché, qu'il l'a par force baisée; car pouvoir n'eut elle d'y resister, combien qu'elle se deffendit bien. Mais tant estoit lors Perceval lafre et lourd, que la defense d'icelle ne luy put profiter, qu'il ne luy prit baiser, vouldit elle ou non, voire, comme dit le conte, plus de vingt fois.

8. The incident illustrates the fact that there are certain conventions of the stage, as in every art, which seem rational in their place, but would only provoke sarcastic reflections if adopted in real life.

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more to Wolfram than the same incident in the ordinary Arthurian romances, since it symbolizes for him the victory of the spirit over the flesh,⁹ and is the last proof needed of Parzival's fitness for the Graal Kingship. In Wagner, evidently for dramatic reasons, Gawain is ignored altogether and Parsifal is made the victor over Klingsor. Thus the Christian symbolism in this part of Wagner's work becomes perforce a kind of magic,

9. In fact, the allegory at this point comes very close in its most intimate meaning to that of Bunyan in his *Holy War*, where King Immanuel, in reference to death and resurrection, is made to say: "I will take down this famous town of Mansoul, stick and stone, to the ground. And I will carry the stones thereof, and the timber thereof, and the walls thereof, and the dust thereof, and the inhabitants thereof, into mine own country, even into the kingdom of my father: and will there set it up in such strength and glory as it never did see in this kingdom where now it is placed." BUNYAN, *Holy War*, Ed. Burder, reprinted at Pittsburg, 1830. For the apostolic legends, some of which cast light on the superstitions embodied in the graal romances, see R. A. LIPSIVS, *Die Apokryphen Apostelgeschichten und Apostellegenden*.

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better than Klingsor's merely because it is more efficacious.¹⁰ The difference is the

10. The sign of the cross was no doubt from early times considered infallible against demons, but the spectacular thaumaturgy adopted by Wagner is not that of the church except in legend: Καὶ ὃς εὐθὺς ἀπαντᾷ τῇ τοῦ σταυροῦ δυνάμει τὴν χεῖρα καθοπλίσας, τυποῦσαν αὐτὸν καὶ κατὰ τοῦ δαίμονος βάλλονσαν. NICEPHORUS CHUMNUS on Bishop Theoleptus. BOISSONADE, *Anecdota Graeca*, V. p. 208.

Τότε τὰ πονηρὰ πνεύματα, θεία δυνάμει τιμωρούμενα, εἰς φῶς ἄκοντα τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἤγεν, "Οὐχ ὑπομένομεν" λέγοντα, "οὐδὲ ἀντοφθαλμῆσαι ὅλως τῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ δυνάμει καὶ τῷ συμβόλῳ τοῦ πάθους αὐτοῦ, ὃν σταυρὸν καλοῦσιν. *Barlaam and Josaphat*, BOISSONADE, op. cit., IV. p. 283. Compare ATHANASIUS, *Life of St. Anthony*, sections 23 and 35.

Quanto terrori sit daemonibus hoc signum, &c. LAC-TANTIUS, IV. 27.

Simply to name Christ served the same purpose. Thus in *Barlaam and Josaphat*, the demons say: 'Ἄλλ' ἐπι-κληθεῖς αὐθις ὁ Χριστὸς εἰς συμμαχίαν, πυρὶ τῆς ἡνωθεν ὀργῆς ἡμᾶς καταφλέξας, φυγάδας εἰργάσατο. BOISSONADE, IV. 284.

The formula in the mouth of Saint Aberce, a famous exorcist, was: 'Ἀκάθαρτα πνεύματα, ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι 'Ιησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐξελθόντα, εἰς ὅρος ἀνθρώποις ἀπέλθετε ἀνεπίβατον. BOISSONADE, V. 467.

It is singular that Wagner, a rationalist with Prot-estant antecedents, did not adopt this verbal exorcism rather than the sign of the cross, which has been so severely condemned by all the reformed churches.

WOLFRAM AND WAGNER

same as that between the simple rejection of Simon Magus in the Acts of the Apostles and the elaborate thaumaturgy attributed to the apostles in the later legends. It must be confessed that here Wolfram shows a much more thorough practical knowledge of Christian psychology than his modern rival.

In another case dramatic convenience and truth to human nature both dictated the merging of one character in another. Gurnemanz, the old knightly tutor of Parzival, and Trevirenz, his hermit confessor, both teach him the same lesson. In ignoring Trevirenz and emphasizing the excellent old knight, who is not only devout but experienced, whose piety has been tried in the world of action, Wagner has made a change which can never be improved upon. In enlarging the character of Kundry to that of the Herodias of popular legend and bringing her to rest and peace at last, Wagner has illustrated his

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principle of compassion to a degree that would have been impossible to mediæval minds.¹¹ But in general it may be said that Wagner has read out more profound thought than he has put into the story of Parzival as it left Wolfram's hands. He has reverted to the brilliant externals of the earliest romancers in place of the inner meanings. If the music restores these inner meanings, which Wagner's poem itself falls short of, that is another thing.

11. The law, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live," was ingrained in the middle ages, and even in much later times.

X.

THE GRAAL

It was possible for Wagner to realize scenically what his mediæval predecessors could only imagine. They succeeded in describing, with the utmost vividness of which words are capable, the graal as glowing by a light from within itself. The electric light enabled Wagner to perform this miracle. It will doubtless be achieved in time without the aid of an electric apparatus. But to Wolfram, who was evidently reluctant to follow his models in the too close identification of the graal, with the deepest of Christian mysteries, the form of this object and its virtues are rather vague. There is no doubt, from the very first attempt to use the history and fables about Arthur as a background for

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romanticizing the political and ecclesiastical theories and opinions of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, that the graal was understood to be the dish out of which Jesus and his disciples had eaten the last Supper.¹ The

1. The fact that it is usually a cup, not a dish, that is spoken of in the legends, points back to the quarrel between the laity and the clergy over the limitation of the former to communion in one kind. This was resented at the point of the sword in Bohemia, and the deprivation was felt bitterly elsewhere, particularly by the aristocratic and military classes. The existence of such vessels as the Genoese *catino* has nothing to do with the graal romances, all of which invariably represent the miraculous dish as having been taken to heaven or to some inaccessible region of Asia. In fact, it would have annoyed kings, nobles and romancers in Northern Europe greatly to have been obliged to confess that an Italian commune possessed the most wonderful relic in Christendom.

International jealousy on points of this sort in the middle age is exemplified by the conflict of opinion over the identity of the spear supposed to have pierced the side of Christ as he hung on the cross. Germany had rested since the time of Henry the Fowler in the belief that when that monarch gave Swabia as well as a great deal else for a lance head and two nails said to have once belonged to Constantine the Great, he secured the

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best proof that could be desired of the novelty of this idea and its lack of any traditional perspective is that nobody knew what

weapon with which the side of Christ was pierced. [*Compilatio Chronologica*, ad annum 920; BODO, *Syn- tagma de Ecclesia Gandersheim.*; SIGEBERT of Gemblours.] They carried it to battle and fancied that it won them victories [DITMARUS, lib. I.]. They insisted on seeing it at the coronation of their king-emperor [DITMARUS, lib. V.]. It was stolen and secreted in the interest of one aspirant or another to the throne [HERMANNUS CONTRACTUS, ad annum 1062]. In the popular mind it was associated with the great sword which, according to legend, had been given to Charlemagne by an angel [JOHANN STATWERCH, ad annum 1380]. But when a rival spear point was dug up at Antioch about the close of the eleventh century, the Germans were taken aback. While many stoutly maintained the genuineness of Constantine's lance, others accepted the discovery at Antioch as true, and with Godfrey of Viterbo, dismissed its competitor as only the lance of St. Maurice. The dispute affected the fortunes of the empire as well as those of the Christian armies in Syria. Henry the Second, the son of a German empress, and very strict in his theories of vassalage and hereditary rights, could hardly fail to be on the imperial side in the controversy. Besides, Constantine was born in Great Britain, and legend had it that his mother was a British princess. Obviously there is good reason for the conduct of the

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the *tryblion*² mentioned by the evangelists Matthew and Mark was like. It is not easy to discern why the Latin Vulgate translated the same word in Matthew by *paropsis* and in Mark by *catinus*.³ But between the information which Isidore⁴ has given, that the *paropsis* was a rectangular, equilateral dish, and the reasonable belief that the Latin *catinus* did not greatly differ from its modern namesake, the Italian *catino*, it can at least be inferred that neither our Lord nor his apostles, in the midst of graver matters, troubled

graal romancers in completely ignoring the lance of Antioch, and in associating the sacred weapon of their fiction with the story of ancient Britain.

2. MATTHEW, xxvi. 23: 'Ο δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν· 'Ο ἐμβάψας μετ' ἐμοῦ ἐν τῷ τρυβλίῳ τὴν χεῖρα, οὗτός με παραδώσει.

MARK, xiv. 20: 'Ο δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς, εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Ἐἷς ἐκ τῶν δώδεκα ὁ ἐμβαπτόμενος μετ' ἐμοῦ εἰς τὸ τρυβλίον.

3. MATTHEW: At ipse respondens, ait: Qui intingit mecum manum in paropside, hic me tradet.

MARK: Qui ait illis: Unus ex duodecim, qui intingit mecum manum in catino.

4. ISIDORE 20, Orig. 4, 10, cited by Forcellini, sub voce.

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themselves overmuch about their table furniture. Nor did the fancy of the twelfth century give itself any trouble to remember the words of Scripture. It simply substituted for them the old French word *graal*, *greal*, *grail*, combined this with *san*, holy, and in a few mispronunciations had the substance of a legend.⁵ The relation of the word *graal* to the Latin *gradale* is now a matter of common knowledge. No doubt, in the fervent disputes of the Sacramentarians and the Orthodox, when Berengar was traversing Anjou and Normandy and keeping everybody in a fever, the French word got an importance it would otherwise never have had. It was always San Graal, San Greal, in these dis-

5. It is probable that *graal* was the original form of the word; *greal* followed as an attempt to spell according to sound, while *grail* was a more learned effort at accuracy. *Gradale* is not the neuter of the Latin adjective *gradalis*, but a corrupt pronunciation of *cratella*. Of course *sancg real*, real blood, followed the phrase San Greal, as the night the day.

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putes, to distinguish it from ordinary dishes. When that sort of thing goes on for half a century or more, there is bound to be mystification in the best educated community, and most people were not educated at all, in the way of book learning, in the twelfth century.

Only one man, the Flemish chronicler Helinandus, paid any attention to the fact that there was a common, every-day graal as well as a holy graal.⁶ This ordinary graal, which people saw at meal time, was a wide, rather deep dish, such as Helinandus supposed would be called *scutella* in Latin. This Latin word has survived in the Italian *sco-della*, equivalent to the English porringer.

6. "Gradalis vel gradale dicitur gallice scutella lata et aliquantulum profunda; dicitur et vulgari nomine graal, quia grata est." Paulin Paris was the first to mention this passage as bearing on the graal romances. Helinandus, being a Fleming, was just far enough removed from the regions where the graal flourished to feel a curiosity about it and at the same time to be able to satisfy himself.

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The additional information which Helinandus gave as to the food-providing powers of the holy graal, he probably found in the graal romances, which in his time were already widely popular. The legend of the preservation of the holy graal and its transfer from Palestine to England by Joseph of Arimathea is to all appearances another of the pure fictions of the twelfth century, with absolutely no perspective⁷ in the way of popular

7. The author of this fiction showed his familiarity with the earlier apocrypha and legends. In fact he had the substance of the Veronica legend in his prayer-book, and the rest were not remote. The Gospel of Nicodemus was a favorite with the Anglo-Saxons and with the early Provençal troubadours. The apocalypse of Paul was newly translated in Western Europe about his time, and doubtless other tales concerning primitive Christians accompanied it. He would ask himself who had been neglected in these tales, and would thus hit upon a name without a fixed and known tradition. With that name he would begin, and would need for guidance in his invention merely the example of numerous lives of the saints and other fictitious narratives familiar to him. No doubt the popular discourses of the preachers interested in the controversy raised by Berengar would be of assistance to him.

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tradition. Wolfram cared nothing for it. The graal for him was simply an object which provided food for the knights who guarded it, by virtue of the fact that every Good Friday a dove descended from heaven and laid upon it an *oblate*.⁸ Even here the direct reference of the older tales to the bread or wafer of the Eucharist was avoided by the German poet. This precious object, he added, was originally guarded by those angels who were neutral at the time of the war in heaven, but was now in the care of an order of Knights called Templeis. The name which was given to this object in the manuscript of Wolfram's poem has long been a puzzle. Besides calling it the graal, he also described it as *Lapsit exillis*.⁹ As *x* and *r* are exactly alike in mediæval

-
8. Ein tub' von himel swinget,
 Uf den stein diu bringet
 Ein kleine wiz ablat,
 Uf dem steine sie die lat
9. Er heizet lapsit exillis.

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writing, these expressions have been read *lapis herilis*,¹⁰—stone of the Lord. Another interpretation is *Lapis ex celis*,¹¹—stone from heaven,—referring, it is supposed, to the legend of a jewel lost by Lucifer when he was cast out of heaven. Neither of these explanations is considered satisfactory.

While it is to be hoped that some good Arabic scholar will take the trouble to look for a possible key to Wolfram's enigma in a phrase of the Koran or the Mohammedan traditions,¹² yet a conjecture may be hazarded that Wolfram tried to reproduce a Greek word or phrase which he had heard associated with the narrative that was in his mind; for example, *λαβίς*, the name of a utensil used

10. HAZLITT'S WARTON, I., p. 49, note 2.

11. *Lapsi de celis* has also been suggested.

12. The variation in the vowels of the name Allah in such phrases as Bismillah and Allhamdolillah suggest the possibility of an Arabic explanation. But the phrase to be satisfactory would have to be one that is or was in actual use.

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in handling the bread broken at the communion, or λέβης, a kind of basin. These words sound nearly alike in Greek, so that a fair representation of the sounds in the mysterious phrase of the *Parzival* is given by either λαβίς θεσκελος, or λέβης θεσκελος — miraculous or wonderful holder, or miraculous basin. One may smile at these phrases, but how about ἅγια λαβίς — holy holder,¹³

13. Οτε δὲ μέλλει σφραγίσαι τοὺς ἄρτους, λέγει· Ποίησον τὸν μὲν ἄρτον τοῦτον, ἐνικῶς, ὡς εἰς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστός οὐχ' ὡς τινες ἀμαθῶς λέγουσι, τοὺς ἄρτους τούτους· καὶ ὅτε μέλλει ὑψῶσαι, ὑψοῖ ὅλους ὁμοῦ, καὶ μελίζει τὸν προσκομιζόμενον πρῶτον ἄρτον, καὶ τίθησι τὴν μερίδα, ἐν τῷ ἁγίῳ ποτηρίῳ, καὶ ἐγχέει καὶ τὸ ζέον, ὡς ἔθος. Εἶτα, λαβὼν τὴν ἁγίαν λαβίδα μετὰ της δεξιᾶς χειρὸς, βάφει αὐτὴν ἐν τῷ ἁγίῳ αἵματι· τῇ δὲ ἀριστερῇ χειρὶ λαμβάνει ἕκαστον ἄρτον, καὶ εἰσφέρει τὴν ἁγίαν λαβίδα, μετὰ τοῦ ἁγίου αἵματος βεβαμμένην, καὶ ἐγγίζει αὐτὴν ἐν τῷ ἁγίῳ ὄρτῳ σταυροειδῶς ἐν τῷ μέρει, ἐν ᾧ ἐχαράχθη ὁ σταυρὸς ὑπὸ τὴν ψίχα, καὶ ἀποτίθῃσι τοῦτον ἐν τῷ ἄρτοφορίῳ. κ. τ. λ. *Euchologion Mega*. Phoenix Printing-house, Venice, pp. 105-6.

Greek preachers did not hesitate to describe the Virgin Mary under the figure of the λαβίς with which the seraph in Isaiah (vi, 6) took a live coal from the altar. BOISSONADE, *Anecdota Graeca*, III. pp. 24, 26.

Extracts from NEALE'S *Liturgies*, a translation of Greek service books, which is not accessible to me, will

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which is used outright in the ritual explanations of the Greek Church? Attributing to the first of these the changes which Wolfram is supposed to have made in the Latin phrases already cited and the result is *λαψιδ έσκελος*. The form of the object is evidently ignored by Wolfram, and his German ear would not distinguish Greek *β* from *f* or *p*, nor *θ* from *t*, while *κ* for *sk* is an almost universal corruption. Phrases of this sort may easily have been imported into Western Europe by returning crusaders, especially Templars. That Wolfram had a Latin expression in mind is most unlikely. He would have known what

be found in the supplementary note on the graal in WILSON'S DUNLOP. The way the name of Joseph of Arimathea figures in some of the Eastern liturgies is suggestive. Moreover, the thought of a Greek original for Wolfram's phrase fits very well with the opinion of Görres that the poet had a Greek model for some parts of his poem. HAZLITT'S WARTON, I., p. 50, note. Mr. Price, in discussing the subject, points out that the cup of the patriarch Joseph might help to suggest the legend attached to his namesake of Arimathea.

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it meant and how the words were divided, even though he could not write them. Greek words orally transmitted and curiously distorted in the process occur in the philosophical and theological discussions of the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The classical instance is *scinderesis*, a common word with the scholastic philosophers, supposed to be intended for a rare and late Greek *συντήρησις*.

XI.

FLEGETANIS

Wolfram was twitted even in his own day with his tricks of mystification, as those point out who have had the good fortune to read Gottlieb of Strasburg's *Tristan*.¹ Perhaps another well-known puzzle in the *Parzival* is also to be explained by Wolfram's desire to bewilder his readers with a pretense of remote or occult learning. In the ninth book it is said that "Master Kyot" obtained his information about the graal at Toledo, Spain, from the writings of an Arabian, or rather Jewish

1. KARL PANNIER, *Parzival* (translated into modern German), introduction, says that Gottlieb described Wolfram as —

Vindaere wilder maere
Der maere wildermaere.

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philosopher named Flegétanis.² The volume was dusty from long neglect. It was in crooked heathen script. Kyot studied the

2. Price, in his famous preface to Warton, gives a paraphrase of this passage somewhat different from that which follows in the text herewith. HAZLITT'S WARTON, I., pp. 50 f. The original is as follows:

Ein heiden Flégetânîs,
bejagete an künste hôhen pris
dér sélbe fisiôn
was geborn von salmôn,
ûs israhêlscher sippe erzilt
von alter her, uuz unser schilt
der touf wart für'z hellefiur.
der schreip von's grâles âventiur.
er was ein heiden vaterhalp,
Flégetânîs, der an ein kalp
bette als ob ez waer'sin got.
wie mac der tievel selhen spot
gefüegen an sô wiser diet,
daz sie niht scheidet ode schiet
dâ von der treit die hoehsten hant
unt dem élliu wunder sint bekant?
Flégetânîs der heiden
kunde uns wol bescheiden
iesliches sternen hinganc
unt siner künfte widerwanc;
wie lange ieslicher umbe gêt,
è er wider an sin zil gestêt,

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strange letters with diligence, but had to learn necromancy besides in order to understand what he read. Even then, if he had not been baptized,³ he would have failed, and

mit der stérnen umbereise vart
 ist geprüevet aller menschlich art.
 Flégetânîs der heiden sach,
 dâ von er blûweclîche sprach,
 im gestîrn' nur sinen ougen
 verholenbaeriu tougen.
 er jach, ez hiez ein dinc der grâl
 des namen las er sunder twâl
 imme gestirne, wie der hiez.
 ein schar in uf der erden liez:
 diu fuor ûf über die sternen hôch.
 op die ir unschult wider zoch
 sit muoz sin pflegen getouftin fruht
 mit also kiuschlicher zuht:
 diu mennischeit ist iemer wert
 der zuo dem grâle wirt gegert.
 sus schreip dervon Flégetânîs, etc.

— BARTSCH, *Parzival* text, IX., 623 ff.

3. It has been remarked that Wolfram seems to have considered himself an advocate of the rite of baptism. That would be quite natural, if Karl Pearson is right in his estimate of it as a ceremony of old Teutonic heathenism as well as of Christianity. "If the father accepted the child, he was asked how it should be named; he then poured water over it and gave it a name. Occa-

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the secret of the wonderful manuscript would still be unknown. For never can the heathen understanding penetrate the mystery of the graal. The book showed that Flegétanis belonged to the race of Solomon, and that he was renowned for wisdom in days before the beginning of Christianity. He discovered the courses of the stars, where and when each rises and sets and completes its periodical movement. He calculated the orbits of the stars, to which bends the life of mankind. Fearfully he hinted at a great mystery which the stars revealed to him; it was a thing called the graal. In the stars he found it written that the graal was left on earth by its first guardians, whose purity drew them back again to the stars. Christendom [Flegétanis knew all about Christianity, though he lived

sionally he left this ceremony to one of his near kin, who then named and baptized the child. This same heathen baptism existed also in Germany." PEARSON, *Chances of Death and Other Essays*, II., p. 212 f.

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before the time of Christ!] must now cherish the stone with the purest virtue.

Kyot, having mastered the book, sought a record of the later vicissitudes of the graal in Latin, and in the chronicles of Ireland, England, and all other countries, till he found it in the history of Anjou. But it is unnecessary to follow Wolfram in his allusions to Angevin affairs. The question is, who was Flegétanis? Observe, in the first place, that the word is accented on the second syllable. This fact alone suffices to dispose of the wild conjecture which makes the name a transcription of the hypothetical Persian Felekhe-Dânêh,⁴ said to mean astronomer or astrolo-

4. This was the supposition of Görres. The main objection to it is that no Persian ever used such a phrase to describe an astronomer. To look for an Arabic original of the name was natural, as the names of the stars adopted by Wolfram, and much of the material of the poem were plainly Oriental. If Flegetanis was a descendant of Solomon, his name ought to be Hebrew. But all these inferences proved defective.

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ger. It has been shown repeatedly by various critics that an Arabic derivation is out of the question. The name should be Hebrew, and it is not; but it may be plain English, of a kind, somewhat damaged by a long continental career. Allusion was made some pages back to a translation of the Koran in 1143 by two monkish scholars, one of whom was an Englishman. This Englishman was Robert de Retines, the Retines being perhaps a corruption of Reading.⁵ After he finished his work on the Koran for Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Cluny, he decided to remain in Spain, and eventually became Archdeacon of Pampeluna. In addition to the Koran he translated one or more of the writings of Alkendi, a Jewish-Arabian philosopher of the ninth century.⁶ If he had turned the philo-

5. Radinges is a form for Reading used in the *Chronicon de Bello*.

6. Alkendi was one of the earliest of the Arabian scholastic philosophers.

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sophical works of Alkendi into Latin, he might have done a real service to the world, as these have since nearly all disappeared. But he preferred astrology, and so the pieces which he translated, according to the reports of those who have glanced at them,⁷ must correspond very closely to the supposititious book described by Wolfram von Eschenbach. Retines appears to have been called Ketines⁸

7. "Tanner attributes to Robert de Retines a tract contained in several manuscripts at Oxford, entitled *Judicia Jacobi Alkindi Astrologi ex translatione Roberti Anglici*, . . . which appears not improbable from the circumstance that the same tract occurs in a manuscript . . . in the British Museum [MS. COTTON, Appendix, VI., fol. 109, r^o] with the title, *Incipiunt Judicia Alkindi Astrologi, Rodberti de Ketene translatio*. Its subject is purely astrological, the object being to reduce to a system which admits of calculation the supposed influence of the planets on the elements, on mankind, and on private actions and political events." WRIGHT, *Biographia Britannica Literaria*, II., p. 119.

8. This error lasted until the eighteenth century. Fabricius corrected it, though he may not have been the first to do so. Huet, a French bishop and a renowned Latinist, accepted the error in his treatise on translators.

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in Spain, and his name in that form is frequent in manuscripts. As a monk, or even secular priest, he would be known as Frey Ketines, and here is at least a rational, if not historical explanation of the origin of Fle-gétanis. An *l* for an *r*⁹ is not infrequent

Huet's remarks are of interest aside from his blunder: "Petri Cluniacensis impensis et hortatu Alcorani conversionem molitus est Robertus Ketenensis Anglus, Ecclesiae olim Pompelonensis Archidiaconus, Hermannii Dalmatae opera adjustus, qui alia quoque ipse ad Muhammedi doctrinam et res gestae spectantia opuscula ex Arabico Latine rependit. HUETIUS, *De Interpretatione*, pp. 185 f.

9. This is illustrated by a curious blunder in the printed editions of Gower's *Confessio Amantis*. In the fourth book, according to Pauli's edition, occur these lines:

Claudius, Esdras and Sulpices,
Termegis, Pandulf and Frigidilles,
Menander Ephiloquorus,
Solins, Pandas and Josephus
The first were of enditours
Of old croniques and eke auctours.

Among other problems offered by these verses was that of the identity of Frigidilles. Warton thought Fredegair, a Burgundian chronicler of the seventh century,

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mispronunciation, and *g* hard for *k* an error of hearing familiar enough. Putting the name of a translator for that of the author is something that happens even in modern times, with all the improvements that have been made in means and methods for identifying books and writers.

was intended, or Frigeridus, a writer mentioned by Gregory of Tours, but whose works are all lost. Finally Morley, in his reprint of the poem, changed the word to "Frige Dares," which may not be what Gower wrote, but undoubtedly indicates the name he had in mind. In all the explanations, a mistake of *l* for *r* is taken for granted.

XII

WAGNER'S ORIENTALISM

While accusing Wolfram of mystification, we may also record the same charge against Wagner. But in his case the result is really to enrich the story. Following certain Orientalists of dubious authority, Wagner changed the name *Perceval* or *Parzival* into *Parsifal*, as if equivalent to a hypothetical Arabic phrase, *Parsi Fal*, to which is attributed the meaning, Pure Fool. That no such Arabic phrase exists is a matter of indifference, if it be conventionally understood that the name of the hero indicates his character and is in harmony with his story. It is possible that *Perceval* is nothing more profound or far-fetched than *Pers*, *Piers*, *Pierse*, *Pierce*, *Perz*, *Peter*, of the *Vale*. *Peter* was in former times a common name in literature for the honest, guileless,

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simple-minded man, as in William Langland's *Vision of Piers the Plowman*, and in folk-lore generally¹ for the simpleton, the fool of the family, or the male character corresponding to the female Cinderella. This is so well known that a distinguished English novelist has given his hero the name of Peter Simple, and has literally developed his elaborate fiction along the familiar lines of the childish *märchen* about the boy apparently stupid, who becomes a man honored and powerful and of high rank. If into this foolish Piers of the Vale can be read not merely the myth of the Celtic Peredur² and the story

1. St. Peter himself figures in the folk-lore of various nations as a foolish but honest character. See CRANE, *The Exempla of Jacques de Vitry*, p. 157., BUSK, *Roman Legends*, p. 173 seq., and many other collections.

2. The characteristics of the mythical Peredur that are reproduced in the romantic Perceval are not to be ignored. But they do not indicate a legendary origin for Perceval, any more than a similar coincidence in the case of one of Scott's heroes would prove that hero to be the reminiscence of an Ossianic deity.

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of the politics and religion of the twelfth century, but also the history of Buddha and the symbolic allegory of Mara,³ so much the better. But there is no use of stumbling over etymologies that are right under foot, in the search for something remote and wonderful. That is too much like a renewal of the quest for the holy graal.

Wagner's acceptance of the rash Arabic definition of his hero's name and the happy fitness of the blunder merely illustrate anew how certain cycles of European tales absorb Orientalism, real or pretended, as a sponge takes up water. Nothing can be more germane to the tale of *Parsifal*, as Wagner has recast it, than the admirable incident of the suspended spear or the chorus of magical flower maidens. But if any future Celtic enthusiast attempts to account for these things with stories from Brittany or Wales, he will

3. *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XIX., p. 147 seq.

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simply be buried under an avalanche of Buddhist literature.

Wagner is supposed to have got his magical machinery in this case from the perusal of some Oriental translations by Burnouf. But he only followed the example of many in past times. As was long ago pointed out, Wolfram's poem was surcharged with Eastern lore. "The scene, for the most part," wrote Price, "is not only laid in the East, but a large proportion of the names are of decidedly Oriental origin. The Saracens are always spoken of with consideration; Christian knights unhesitatingly enrol themselves under the banner of the Caliph; no trace of religious animosities is to be found between the followers of the Crescent and the Cross; and the Arabic appellations of the seven planets are thus distinctly enumerated: Zwal (Zuhael), Saturn; Musteri, Jupiter; Muret (Meryt), Mars; Samsi (Shems), the Sun; Alligasir, Venus; Kittr (Kidr), Mer-

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cury; Kamer (Kæmer), the Moon.”⁴ A subsequent reaction against this tolerance is alleged in the case of Albrecht von Scharfenberg’s⁵ completed poem of *Titurel*, begun by Wolfram. Yet in spite of his fanaticism, Albrecht wrote a poem saturated with Oriental ideas and dotted with Oriental names, his age being replete with travelers’ tales, and in particular with fictions about Prester John, whom Wolfram had already involved in the all-embracing net of the graal romance.

The same tendency to gather fantasies from the East was shown in the cycle of Charlemagne, in the legend of Dietrich of Berne, in that of Virgil, and subsequently in that of Faust. On this purely incidental but ever-recurring vagary of the European imagination, Warton built his theory of the Arabian origin of romance, a structure as unsubstan-

4. HAZLITT’S WARTON, I., p. 50 seq.

5. BERGMANN, *San Greal*, p. 56 seq.

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tial as its foundation was insecure. The Eastward look of the Western myth-maker was as characteristic of Plato with his *Er* of Armenia, as with any later story-teller, and no age since has neglected it down to the date of Madame Blavatsky's rides on elephants with impossible tails in search of Tibetan mahatmas that never existed. Nor will it ever be forgotten.

To the inquiry why little or nothing is said of the contributions to Arthurian romance, particularly to the graal department of the cycle, between the age of Wolfram and that of Wagner, the answer must be that the creative impulse was rarely shown in the interval. The Arthurian motives gathered an indiscriminate mass of popular tradition as they developed, but this tradition was only a new version of tales familiar in other forms. It adds nothing to the story of Sleeping Beauty to figure as the object of a quest by the knight-

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hood of the Round Table. The facility with which the later Arthurian romancers grabbed everything in sight can be illustrated from Dr. Evans's book,⁶ which has recently been issued in the United States after some years of publicity in England. In the first place, the narrative is given under the form of a vision. Vision literature was sporadically more or less frequent from early Christian times until the close of the mediæval period; but it became a prevalent form of story-writing with the appearance of the *Apocalypse of Paul* in the West, and the production of elaborate tales—the *Vision of Tnugdalus*, 1150 or later, *St. Patrick's Purgatory*, about 1180, and *Godeschalk's Vision*, which pretends to the date of 1188. Again, the concluding portion of Perceval's adventures in this book

6. EVANS, *The High History of the Holy Graal*. This is a translation of a French romance which Dr. Evans seems to date earliest of all fiction in which Perceval figures.

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is related in the manner of an *Irish Voyage*. Tales of this kind began to filter into the general literature of Europe about the same time, roughly speaking, as the visions already mentioned. Finally Virgil figures in this romance precisely as he does in *L'Image du Monde* and other thirteenth century tales of wonder, and much more definitely than in Wolfram's poem. Thus most of the fictional activities of the first half of the thirteenth century are summarized under a theme originally foreign to them. From one case infer the rest.

The book that goes by the name of Sir Thomas Malory is merely an adequate conspectus of a vast body of previous literature. As between Tennyson and Wagner, it may be said that the former turned the old tales into genuine poetry, something which few impartial critics would claim for Wagner. On the other hand, the whole spirit of Tennyson is modern. Compared with the ancient tales

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his work is an anachronism, while Wagner is properly mediæval. In both there is a recrudescence of the earliest motives of the fiction, but in very diverse ways. As Map had used the tales to glorify English royalty in the twelfth century, so Tennyson used them for a similar purpose in the nineteenth century. As Map had gone to the verge of blasphemy in giving to his Sir Galahad the characteristics of Jesus Christ, so Wagner has done the same thing with his Parsifal. Those who condemn him for this should remember that he is absolutely faithful to tradition. From the mediæval point of view, whatever may be said in censure, he is seen to be the first legitimate successor of Wolfram.

Though, as has been said, Wagner seems at times to fall short of the best thought of the great thirteenth century poet, he still has the advantage of an age cultured to a degree capable of reading all past poetical or

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romantic achievement into his lines. By a supremely skillful use of his transcendent powers as a dramatist, a musician and a master of the resources of the stage, he has placed the ancient tale into a form and a situation where it must be vitally attractive to many a future generation. It is worth while to observe, finally, how much better the world is off for the materials required in the study of this drama than for those used in any work by any great dramatist of the past. That is an improvement in the conditions of human thought for which the man of letters can not be too thankful.

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